A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:32 p.m. Tuesday, June 13, 2023, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Also present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Laurelei McVey, Micah Bandurrage, Jamie Leslie, Kris Blume and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

__X__ Liz Strader	__X__ Joe Borton
__X__ Brad Hoaglun	__X__ John Overton
__X__ Jessica Perreault (4:35 p.m.)	__X__Luke Cavener

___X___ Mayor Robert E. Simison

Simison: Council, we will call the meeting to order. For the record it is June 13th, 2023, at 4:32 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next item up is the option of the agenda.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: I move adoption of the agenda as published.

Borton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

1. **Agreement Between the Streamliner Aquatic Recreation Inc. and the City of Meridian for Use of Meridian Community Swimming Pool by Streamliners Swim Team**

2. **Agreement Between the Meridian Killer Whales Swim Team, Inc. and the City of Meridian for use of Meridian Community Swimming Pool by Killer Whales Swim Team**

3. **Addendum to the Master Pathway Agreement Between the Nampa and Meridian Irrigation District and the City of Meridian**

4. **Approval of Construction Contract to BriCon, Inc. for the Five Mile Creek Pathway Bridge Connection for the Not-To-Exceed amount of $445,000.00**

5. **Greater Ada County Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Service Agencies Joint Powers Agreement Regarding Active Shooter and Hostile Event Response**

6. **Development Agreement (Jennie's Retail H-2022-0071) Between the City of Meridian and Mauricio and Ilene Garcia for Property Located at 2365 E. Fairview Ave.**

7. **Development Agreement (Prairiefire Subdivision H-2022-0053) Between the City of Meridian and Providence Properties, LLC for Property Located at 3539 N. Locust Grove Rd.**

8. **Development Agreement (Sessions Parkway H-2022-0046) Between the City of Meridian and GFI - Meridian Investments, LLC for Property Located at 2700 N. Eagle Rd.**

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: On the Consent Agenda I move that we approve the Consent Agenda as published and that the Mayor be authorized to sign and the Clerk to attest.

Borton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

ITEMS MOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

Simison: There are no items moved from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

9. Public Works: 2023 Streetlight Master Plan

Simison: So, we will go into Item 9, which is a department report from Public Works on the 2023 streetlight master plan. Good evening, Laurelei. Or it's still afternoon'ish.

McVey: Thank you, Mayor and Members of the Council. We have a couple of Public Works topics this evening, so you will be hearing quite a bit from me. Perfect. Thank you. All right. Well -- oh, do you want to start with streetlights or solid waste? I think streetlights was first on the agenda. Okay. Perfect. All right. Well, I am really excited to be here to finally present to you guys the streetlight master plan. So, this has been years -- and when I say years -- years in the making, the -- we have not had any formalized documented streetlight plan before this and so this is a really important step forward for our -- our city and our program. So, I wanted to do a couple of quick introductions first, because I certainly did not write this plan by myself. I wanted to introduce you guys -- you all know Warren Stewart. He's the city engineer. He manages this group, but I wanted to introduce you to Micah. Micah is our transportation and utility coordinator and so part of Micah's job is streetlights. So, you will hear quite a bit about Micah's job throughout this presentation, but I really wanted to thank and acknowledge Micah. He did a lot of the heavy lifting of getting this plan put together and actually getting us to the state where we have a documented plan. So, as I mentioned, this is the first formal streetlight master plan that we have ever had. We completed it in house, which I'm incredibly proud of. Our purpose was to document the program to really put into place how does the program work today. Look at where do we want to go in the next few years, establish some goals, establish a five year capital plan with the current funding mechanisms in place and, then, also document any program constraints that currently exist in the program. So, a little bit of background I think it's important to understand how we got to where we are at today. So, streetlights previously were installed in the city with new development over time without a lot of standardization. So, Idaho Power also installed some lights back in the early 2000s to do a small program to enhance safety, but it was never intended to be a full citywide streetlight program. So, over time this program grew. When Public Works took it over in 2008 we actually -- we hired the transportation and utility coordinator, whose primary job at that point was utility coordination. The street lighting duties ended up falling under that position and so in 2010 when we took over this program we had about 3,400 lights in the city. So, we implemented standards and in 2016 we required that all new lights be LED, so that was one of the standards that got put in place and you fast forward to today to 2023 and we have almost 8,600 lights in the city. That's a 155 percent increase over this time. So, significant program growth. So, what does it look like? I just mentioned we have 8,600 city-owned streetlights. We add about 300 to 500 per year and I will talk about how we add those to the system. About 44 percent of our system is LED lights today and we will talk more about our program to convert HPS lights, high pressure sodium lights, to LED. We also have about 1,700 additional lights needed in our underserved areas and we will talk more -- a bit more about that as well. Where this program is going -- we anticipate for full city build out, which is still a long time away, but this program will be upwards of 29,000 streetlights in the city once the full city is built out. So, the streetlight program has five main program elements, which we will go through and talk a little bit about each. So, the first is public safety. So, the real reason for streetlights is that they improve and enhance public safety. So, they can do this through a variety of mechanisms. They improve visibility for pedestrians and cars. They can help deter crime. They help people feel safe and want to use areas more frequently. They can even help first responders find areas quicker and shorten response time. So, we did an overlay working with the Police Department to overlay the 2022 crimes in the city over areas with deficient lighting and while there is some overlap, you know, there is not a hundred percent direct correlation, but you can definitely see that areas -- you know, streetlights can have an influence on public safety and definitely do help deter crime. So, one of the elements focused on public safety is that in 2024 -- so, this will be the budget that you guys will see later this week, we are recommending that all of our LED replacements for FY-24 be focused on the major intersections. So, this was a recommendation that came out of the Meridian Pedestrian Task Force Safety Group and we will go through -- it's about 180 lights and upgrade those all to LED lights and so that was the first recommendation that kind of came out of that committee related to streetlights. So, how do new lights get added to our system? So, primarily they come in through development or street projects. So, ITD, ACHD. They come in also through the city's CDBG or underserved areas. But the majority of them come through new developments. So, they are paid for by developers. Once they are constructed and the city takes over we pay for power and we also pay for maintenance and repair costs and, then, if the streetlights are hit or damage we are, then, also responsible for replacement of those. As I mentioned, we put in design standards and specifications. So, now all new lights going into the city meet those specifications. They meet the type, they meet the spacing and they are all required to be LED. So, that's a huge step forward for us. So, the -- the basic day-to-day operating of the streetlight program -- so, we have ongoing annual expenses, so important to remember streetlight funding even though it comes out of my workgroups, it is funded out of the General Fund. So, we have an operating budget of about 400,000 dollars per year that goes to electricity, it goes to maintenance and repair costs, it goes towards paying the deductible on insurance claims. So, that's our annual operating cost. We do have one staff member that is split between transportation and utility coordination and streetlight duties. We are currently doing an hour study to determine, you know, where his time is split and spent to make sure that we are allocating his hours in the right fund. But he has many other duties besides just streetlights, but he is responsible for new lighting design if the city takes on a lighting project. Designing LED retrofits. Serving as a project manager. He reviews all of the new development plans that come in amongst other -- other things. So, the general day to day of streetlights. So, we have an outage map. So, if anybody notices a streetlight that's out they can on our website go to a map, identify the streetlight on a map and report to us that it is out. You can put your contact information in if you choose and we will get back with you and let you know when that light is fixed. We also respond to damaged lights. So, anytime we see that -- well, if somebody hits a light. So we generally try -- if you know who hits a light through the police department, we will attempt to recover those costs through insurance. And, then, probably the other biggest customer issue that we deal with on streetlights is around shielding. So, you may get customers that say, you know, this streetlight is too bright, it's shining in my windows. We have developed industry standard and -- an industry standards of light readings and we will go out at night to the property line and take measurements and if the light -- we call it light trespass is higher than our standards then at the city's cost we can sometimes install shielding. If the light trespass is below the standards, then, we sometimes offer the residents at their own cost can have us put up shielding. So, you can't always put up shielding, but it is -- it is an option in some cases and, obviously, lighting is very subjective of whether it's too bright or -- or not bright enough. So, our underserved areas -- this is one of our major program components. So, these are areas that were developed before our standards went into place. So, they are generally the older areas of town and the streetlights -- there may be too few or they may be too far apart to meet our current standards. That doesn't necessarily mean that they are -- it's an imminent problem, but it just means it doesn't meet our current lighting standards. So, we pay for new lights two ways. Through the city's General Fund annual budget and, then, through CDBG grant funding. When we go through these areas and try to determine where to install lights we look at a variety of things, but we prioritize is it close to schools? Is it on a walking path to school? We look at the data from the Police Department on traffic accidents, crimes. Are there crosswalks? We also look at redevelopment potential and ACHD's five year work plan, because if that street or that area is going to be redeveloped in the near term, the lights will be upgraded to current standards as part of that. So, it doesn't make sense for us to go in and do it in advance. So, there is a lot of things that go into us deciding where to put these lights. You will notice as we break them down by district, primarily they are in the older districts that developed before street lighting standards went into place. As I mentioned we have about 1,700 of these identified needs. Currently we fund between 80 and 85 thousand from the General Fund and our average that we have received every year from CDBG is about 89,000. New streetlights are expensive, so it's about 9,000 dollars per streetlight. So, we can install between nine and 18 new lights per year if you combine the General Fund with the CDBG funding. At that rate it -- we have, you know, pretty long schedule to get all of those lights replaced, but there are some constraints with that. It's not just adding budget, we have to have project management resources and -- and the ability to manage those projects as well. So, this is our five year capital improvement plan. So, there is two primary subdivisions that have been identified. Both of those subdivisions have either no or very few streetlights and are close to several schools. So, those kind of jumped up on our priority and you will see this is just with the city General Fund we will install between six and nine streetlights per year in those -- in those subdivisions. We also have a plan -- because CDBG funding is less predictable, we do have a plan and priority for the CDBG areas. Those generally tend to be near the downtown area. But, again, we use the same prioritization of close to schools, close to parks, walking routes, and so we have a priority plan in place, too, as we get CDBG funding to go ahead and -- and work through that plan as well. I guess I should mention on these maps, the shaded areas -- so, the tan areas are underserved -- areas that have an underserved lighting need. The blue areas are underserved lighting needs that are eligible for CDBG. So, our next program element is our high pressure sodium to LED conversions. So, this is a program that results in long-term cost savings. So, when you convert these high pressure sodium to LED, a couple of ways that you save money. You reduce the wattage. You reduce -- so, they require less energy. There is less maintenance. They have longer life spans. And so these are spread out kind of more evenly through the districts, but we also receive energy efficiency rebates from Idaho Power when we convert these. So, we have about 56 percent of the system left to still convert and we get our funding for this through the General Fund. Over the next ten years we have budgeted between 75 and a hundred thousand per year for LED conversions. With that we can convert approximately 200'ish lights and with that that would take us about 20 years to finish the conversions. This is one area where we do have some capacity to take on additional work if there was more funding. You know, if we were able to increase the budget from a hundred thousand to 260,000 we could complete the LED retrofits in about seven years and that would result in a savings of about a million dollars over the next 20 years. So, it's definitely a way that we could move this program forward. And, then, additionally, once the LED conversions are complete we could, then, shift that funding to put it into the underserved areas to -- to accelerate the conversion -- or the install of lights there. So, this is our plan for the next five years with LED conversions and you will see this is much more spread out through the city, but you will see -- the first year in pink is the major intersections from the task force. So, a couple of things that are, you know, program constraints for us. So, as the program continues to grow at some point we will need to add additional staff. Like I said, we are -- this is the first time we have had this much detail around the program; right? So, we are really able to start tracking some metrics and tracking workloads and progress and goals. So, we -- you know, some of our goals for the next five years is to better evaluate staffing and decide, you know, when is the right time to bring on additional people. One of the things is since this program has evolved over time over different -- different work groups, the data accuracy is -- is -- could be improved. One of our goals for the next five years is to put this into our Public Works asset management tracking system and for public sector. So, we are currently working on that to get all of the streetlights in -- into that. We are seeing some improvements in cost supply chain and -- well, I shouldn't say cost. Supply chain and contractor availability. But these are areas that significantly impacted us over the -- the period with COVID and really led to a slowdown. We are seeing some of that. Costs are definitely higher. So, we are able to do less with, you know, flat budgets and that kind of goes to funding. We are a little bit constrained, right, with -- with resources from project management, but we do have some -- some area that we could, you know, if there were available funding we could increase some of the program elements like the LED replacements. So, like I mentioned, our goals for the next five years is we want to execute well on this capital improvement plan. We want to improve data accuracy by putting it in our asset management database. We want to evaluate when is the right time to bring on more staff, both from a streetlight management program and, then, at some time it may make sense to also bring in maintenance of -- and -- of -- and streetlight LED conversions in house. And, then, also just make sure that we are investigating new technologies and staying up -- up to speed. Technology changes rapidly on these lights and just making sure that we -- are our standards are up to spec. We are putting in the best lights that we can and that we are changing them out and maintaining them with the best lights that we can. So, that is in a nutshell our streetlight program. Like I said, I think the most important thing that this does is it puts all of the program information into one place that didn't exist before. It really outlines what we do, how we do it and gives us some good goals to work towards that are, you know, published in alignment with your guys' direction, in alignment with what we can accomplish and really proud of the staff and the work that it took to get to this level. So, happy to stand for any questions.

Simison: Thank you, Laurelei. First want to start, you know, when -- when you -- when you accepted the Public Works job one of the things you talked about was wanting to do more of this work in-house. So, congratulations to you and the team in helping achieve that result. You know, that's -- that's -- that's the first -- you know, it's great to see that taking place. So, with that, Council, questions?

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: Just two quick questions. Laurelei, what's an example of a data point that isn't terribly accurate today that we are -- that we are referring to that could be made more accurate going forward?

McVey: So, Councilman Borton, we are missing some information on streetlights, such as, you know, maybe the wattage type or the pole height or are there, you know, additional -- has there been 5G antennas put on our police cameras, just putting all of that data into one place and being -- being able to easily query and say we have this many LEDs, we have this many of this type of pole, we have this many that are this age. So, it really will help us better with some of that data analysis. So, the data exists. It's spread out. There is some missing. So, it will really help us putting it into this asset management database. It will also help us track life cycle cost, too, you know, how often are we replacing things. What would be the ROI on things? It -- it just -- it really helps with those things.

Borton: Mr. Mayor. The second question was on the -- the constriction caused by labor. The labor needs to -- to accelerate the plan. Are there private contractors that do streetlight conversions that you could contract with theoretically in a short period of time to accelerate it, rather than on-board new employees?

McVey: Councilman Burton, that's a -- that's a great question and that's -- that's kind of what we tried the last couple of years, right, with the accelerated budgets. So, the answer to your question, yes, there are consultants that would happily take on some of the design of these projects. Where we run into labor constraints is the project management and their getting it through some of the city's internal processes. So, you still have to have staff that get it through the Purchasing Department and out to bid and manage the invoices that come in and process those through the Finance Department and do, you know, inspections and enter it into the asset management program and so that's where some of the -- so, the design piece can absolutely be done outsourced, but that's where we -- we kind of struggled with -- we took on more than we could get done and where we had the backlog of -- of funding and the carry forward, which I'm happy to announce we will have the majority of that spent by the end of this fiscal year. It's all in design or currently in bid or construction.

Simison: And if I can just add onto that and you can slap me if I get this wrong, but from my conversations it's -- it's twofold. We currently have the low bit contractor and they have limited ability to do the work. So, the next contractor is going to cost more money than the ones we are, which reduces our ROI, as well as, secondarily, if we bring on another staff member, then, our ROI also dissipates. So, there is that fine -- I don't -- I don't know where the line -- that's why I think that they are trying to figure out where is that line where it makes sense to accelerate where you are not losing your benefit of doing them faster, as compared to waiting until the natural change over for at least for the LED conversion component. That's -- that's where some of this -- but we also have power costs going up and I think that there was a factor that you did include some anticipated power increases in the -- the numbers; correct?

McVey: Yes. Yeah. And so the Mayor's spot on. We -- you know, we feel like we need to continue to each year run the ROI on this and say where are our power costs, where are our contracted labor costs, where are our internal costs and -- and where does that -- and there is really the two parts which he mentioned. There is the LED conversions, which is a little bit different than the actual install of new streetlights. Those take kind of two different things to manage and one is a little bit easier, that's why we can do, you know, 192 LED conversions, where we -- installing new lights you have to do complete design and utility work and design of the infrastructure and so it takes -- to have a staff member do that internally definitely takes more -- more work.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thanks, Laurelie. Well, first of all thank you to Micah, Warren and -- and yourself and the whole team for putting the report together. I really appreciated reading the report. I did have some questions. You know, one thing I -- I was struck by -- we had 3,000 lights with the same staffing level that we have today where we have almost three times as many lights now. What percentage of staff time is being spent on, you know, managing the existing inventory of lights -- let's say LED conversions if they were on that seven-year schedule, which we had funded previously, compared to installing new lights, if you were to take a guess?

McVey: Well -- so, Council Woman Strader, that's a great point and we actually are in the middle of doing a more detailed hour study analysis. I think Micah has one -- one, maybe two months of that under his belt. So, I don't know if he could give estimates of the past couple of months. I know on a high level the very first month it was a 50-50 split between his transportation coordination duties and streetlight duties. To further break down the streetlight duties, though, I don't have that off the top of my head, but we -- our plan was to do that for at least six months for a couple of reasons. One to help analyze staff data and, then, two, to also make sure that we are funding this position out of the right fund source.

Strader: Uh-huh. Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I have a few. So, I noticed that in the CFP that that position got moved from 2024 to 2025. So, as part of my review of the budget I have been reviewing all changes to the CFP. But from reading the report it was glaringly obvious to me that there is a need for additional staffing. It doesn't appear like it's up for debate. Maybe it's up for debate whether it should come out of, you know, more -- maybe the position it should come more out of the Enterprise Fund versus General Fund or -- or percentages spent on different activities, but, you know, three times as many lights and a hundred -- a hundred year time frame at the current rate to install new lights, I just want to make a comment, it's not on a question to you, it's just a comment. I think when it comes to the budget time we need to have a serious discussion about that staffing need. I wanted to ask about where do we go with looking into creating a utility for this, because I -- I recall at one point there was an idea -- and I think other cities have done this -- to create a utility to manage our streetlights. What barriers did you come across? Where did that discussion go?

McVey: Councilman Strader, that's a good question. So, we will likely continue to evaluate that. There -- originally when this first was evaluated there was some case law in Idaho that was potentially problematic with a streetlight utility. It's a little bit harder to assign a specific value. So, that's -- you know, if you are going to -- if it's going to be utility you have to be able to assign a specific value to an individual person or property. Since, then, there has been some -- some changes in that and so I think it would be worthwhile to work with the Legal Department and the Finance Department to kind of look at that evaluation again and see is -- is that something that is -- is legal, is it -- would it be challenged? Would it be easy to implement? But currently based on our -- our previous -- the previous work by the Legal Department and Finance Department it was not recommended that we pursue that.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I just have two more. What other cities do use that approach that you are aware of?

McVey: So, I believe right now the city of Caldwell and Coeur d'Alene are the two that have active streetlight utilities.

Strader: And this -- this kind of reminds me of using CDBG funding for affordable housing, where it feels like at first blush there is a lot of hurdles, maybe legally, but this is something that would make sense to dig into. So, I would encourage us to do that. And, then, I just had one more question. Something that kind of just jumped out to me out of the report, just as a little random, but like a -- was there a safety concern around 5G equipment being installed in streetlights and -- and can you help me understand that? Because, obviously, for the general population we have heard there is not a 5G safety concern, but for workers there could be. Could you explain that, please?

McVey: Yes, Council Woman Strader. So, it has more to do with the -- you know, the electrical -- so, in order to work on our streetlight we would have to disconnect, right, to safely work on the -- the electrical system -- disconnect that system before we went up and worked on our system and so there is some coordination that has to occur and some interagency agreements, right, so that we are not sending our contractor out to just, you know, flip the switch and turn off the 5G. So, not necessarily a -- a safety hazard because of the 5G, but a safety hazard in working on that equipment in that proximity you would need to turn off both sources of -- of power.

Strader: Would it -- would it be fair to say that the most efficient way to go about this would be to first convert all of our lights to LEDs and, then, to install the 5G equipment, as opposed to, yeah, having it installed kind of in a haphazard way?

McVey: Council Woman Strader, it -- it wouldn't really matter too much, because either LED or HPS we would still have to -- have to turn the power off to -- to work on the light, so not necessarily a -- a benefit there.

Strader: Okay. Thank you.

Simison: Council, any additional questions?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Just one additional question. Laurelie, your -- your conversation and comments about light pollution or request from residents, how many of those is your team fielding a year? Is it a few a month, dozen over the course of a year, fairly infrequent? I'm just curious.

Simison: Micah, do you want to come and get on the microphone.

McVey: He thought he was going to get away without having to --

Bandurraga: So, wintertime we were averaging about eight to ten calls a week for light shielding. Summertime doesn't seem to be that big of an issue. People are usually in bed by the time it's dark and we get less complaints. Out of all of the calls, every -- every test that I have taken on -- at every property line I have only had one that qualified to add -- to add a light shield in at the city's expense.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor, just a real quick follow up.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Do we get requests from residents to remove or relocate lights or is it mostly just for shielding?

Bandurraga: It's mostly for shielding. One of the stipulations for the shielding is if the light was there before the house was there it's not really the city's responsibility to shield it.

Cavener: Okay. Fair enough.

McVey: So, that is a -- you know, one of the -- the pros and cons you weigh, right, with adding more streetlights in the underserved areas is that those residents are very used to not having those lights in their yards or on their streets. There is definite benefits that come with those that we feel like outweigh and are -- are important. But some of that initial outreach and now there is a new streetlight and it -- it's not something you are -- you are used to is definitely something we hear about when we install some of these lights into new areas.

Simison: Any additional questions? All right. Thank you very much.

10. Public Works: 2023 Solid Waste Master Plan

Simison: So, with that we will move on to Item 10, which is Public Works 2023 Solid Waste Master Plan. And for the record Council Woman Perreault did join us at roughly 4:35, I believe.

McVey: Okay. Well, thank you, Council. This is our other master plan that we have also been working on years -- years in the making and it just conveniently happened that I could present them both to you tonight. So, this one is for our solid waste program. So, that is trash and recycling services in the city. This is also the first time this information has been documented and captured in one place. Another huge step forward for the city. It's really hard to improve on a program if you don't have what's happening in place and you don't have clearly established goals and priorities. So, also really proud of this. So, again, a couple of staff introductions. I know that you guys know some of these people. But the group that is responsible for solid waste coordination in the city -- so, Alex Freitag, he is our business division manager. Peter Hall is our business program manager. And Sayard Schultz is our solid waste coordinator. And a lot of credit on this one goes to Sayard, who worked tirelessly over the last couple of years to get this information documented and really no small feat, similar to what Micah did on the streetlight, is a lot of this information existed in a lot of people's heads or a lot of documents and to pull it all together into one place was a really big effort and huge kudos to those -- those staff members. So, this is, as I said, our first formal solid waste master plan. Also really proud that we completed it in house.

Again our purpose was to document the current conditions of the program. So, how does trash and recycling work today in Meridian? What's offered? How much does it cost? How many people participate? And, then, identify key program issues. So -- so, what -- what are the problems we see facing these programs over the next several years. And, then, establish program goals of how do we work towards solving some of those issues. So, the key issues that we identified were, number one, preserving landfill capacity and we will talk about each of these. The other one is making sure are we providing comprehensive service options to all residents and all businesses. We have a variety of residents and business types. And, then, as we consider making any changes to these programs we want to make sure our rates stay affordable and competitive, because that is a -- is another concern. So, preserving landfill capacity. So, Meridian takes all of its solid waste to the Ada County Landfill and they have recalculated some of their landfill capacity schedules and it is estimated that the Ada County Landfill in its current configuration will fill up sometime between 2065 and 2070. We don't have really specific data on -- on how that -- how quickly that will fill up, but the cells are definitely filling up quicker than they used to and so siting and finding a new landfill is incredibly expensive and so we really need to start working on evaluating options now as we look out towards that 2070 time frame. So, to -- to site and build a new landfill is about 60 million dollars. Just one stage of the landfill. So, they build landfills in stages and they will fill it up until that one cell gets to capacity and, then, they cover it and they cap it and move to the next stage. Meridian uses on average about 25 to 30 percent of an active stage in the landfill and so how do you extend the life of a landfill? Well, you divert more from it. So, there is different ways that you can do that. If you look at what we divert today -- so our annual average is somewhere between eight and nine percent diversion rate. We have set -- and we will talk more about this -- a diversion goal of getting up to 20 percent by 2028. So, the reason we picked 20 percent is that we have seen in the fall when we do coordinated leaf drop-offs and curbside pickups we can get over that 20 percent diversion rate. So, it is possible. And we can talk a little bit more about different ways that we can get there. So, our second issue is identifying all areas, all different types of residents. We have single family residents. We have people that live in multi-family dwellings. Apartments. We have businesses. And are we providing all of the trash and recycling services that those residents and businesses desire? And are we providing them in a way that's easy, accessible, affordable for all of those different sections of our community. So, that's one of the things we will also look at. So, if you look at where we are at today as far as participation rates -- and I know this slide is a little bit busy, but we have nearly a hundred percent participation rate for our single family housing in our recycling program and you may ask, well, that's really great, you guys are doing a great job there. Well, we can take credit for that, but it's also because it's required when they sign up. You get signed up for both services. So, it may not mean that all of those residents are participating in recycling though. So, that's an area that we would like to evaluate. Our commercial businesses have a lower participation rate around, the -- the 40 to 50 percent and so while recycling is also required, we don't necessarily enforce that requirement, because it's not always easy to retrofit existing business spaces to have both types of containers and some businesses don't necessarily have recyclable material. So, those are some things that we could definitely look into. We have two curbside programs. They cost -- you will see the cost there.

We have a glass curbside recycling and we have a grass curbside recycling. Those sit at pretty low participation rates and so one thing that we would like to dig into over the next five years is, you know, why -- why are those participation rates where they are? Is it the cost barrier? Is it -- are we not promoting them enough? Do people know about them? Is the frequency a problem? Is what acceptable materials that you put into it the problem? Because to us it shows, you know, something for these optional add-on programs we don't have a huge participation. So -- so, why is that? It -- you know, it kind of feeds into -- if you look at something like a citywide composting program and you make it -- you know, do you make it a voluntary program? Do you make it a required program? What kind of participation would you get? And what -- what would that cost people to do that either way. So, those are the things that we would like to look at, but -- over the next five years. The underlying piece, though, is any of these changes we really need to make sure that our rates may remain affordable and comparable. Currently they are -- they are spot on with the -- the valley average for rates. So, our five year program goals -- we have set two. One being we want to try to achieve a consistent 20 percent diversion rate by 2028 and we also want to make sure that we are providing access to all services that residents desire and are willing to pay for. You will see in this chart here -- so, this is our waste profile and if you look at where -- where can you achieve more diversion from? You know, we have a pretty equal split between residential trash and commercial trash. So, those are the two sectors that we could really start looking at diversion. So, we put together a five year program plan. It has three areas that will help us work towards these goals. So, the first one is landfill diversion initiative. So, the first thing we would like to do is work on improving our existing program. So, before we add new programs let's figure out why people are or aren't participating in our existing programs and see if we can up some of those through outreach, through cost analysis. We also want to do a full evaluation on citywide composting. So, what would that look like if it was a opt-in program? What would that look like if it was an everybody participates? What would be the cost of those? What are the pros and cons? How much diversion could we achieve if we did something like that? We would also like to look at, you know, improving diversion opportunities for multi-family dwellings. So, currently these -- you know, people can always take things to Republic trans -- Republic Services Transfer Station, but can we make things more accessible or easy? One area where we have seen a large increase in material is the construction and demolition waste. So, is there incentives or ways that we can keep some of that material out of the landfill? One of the things that we are really excited about -- Republic Services is working on a new recycling facility in Las Vegas that will really change, hopefully, the recycling market in the U.S. and allow us to bring back some of the things that are harder to recycle today. So, we are really looking forward to when they get that operational and I think it's really going to be a game changer for the valley as far as what we can recycle and, hopefully, simplify some -- some of the rules around recycling. So, one of the other things is -- is evaluating how we do education and outreach. So, are we using the right methods to -- to get out to people? Do people prefer print? Do people look at what's in their utility bills? Do people look at social media? Are there other ways? Do we need to do radio, you know, ads? There is so many different ways. And are we providing the right information that people want to know about? You know, one of the things we are hoping to develop is a container right sizing. So, a customer could go on and say here is how much -- you know, is your trash can generally half full each week? Well, did you know you can downsize to a smaller container and save money each month? Or if you sign up for a grass cart could you sign up for a smaller trash cart and would that cost offset each other? So, you know, providing different outreach opportunities and different venues, so that we reach as much as the -- of the community as possible. Also I think it's always good to look in at yourself and look at what the city is doing. So, a couple of things we want to do is review and update our ordinances. Those were last looked at in 2010. You know, if we were to bring back big programmatic changes those would have to be updated in there anyways. We also would like to promote diversion opportunities at city events and throughout city departments. And, then, one of the things that's kind of exciting is we are currently evaluating our biosolids drying. So, our biosolids make up about ten percent of the tonnage going to the landfill and this project would help us eliminate that by -- or not eliminate it, but cut that by about half. So, we are currently in evaluation of -- of if that makes sense to put in a biosolids dryer. So, we are really excited, like I mentioned, to have this information documented, to have these goals established to have something to work towards. You know, having these concrete -- the five year goals, we can come back to you and report, you know, when you ask how -- how are things going, we will have actual matrix that we can come back and tell you are we achieving them, what more do we need to do? But mostly just really -- really thrilled to have this documented and complete and I'm happy to stand for any questions.

Simison: Thank you, Laurelie. Council, questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thank you. Thank you so much to the team for working on this. I really enjoyed reviewing the plan. My main question -- well, first a comment. I agreed with the plan, that there is an opportunity, even before evaluating composting, just expanding the grass clippings and leaves to all kind of yard clippings, branches, et cetera. That just feels like low hanging fruit. It's a huge barrier, even for me. It's like I regularly put all kinds of branches and nasty things like that that really shouldn't go in the trash, they can easily be composted. So, I appreciated that comment. I also really appreciated the outreach and thought around multi-family and helping expand recycling -- obviously, with an eye toward worrying about contamination, because it's been a huge issue. So, I don't know how you guys are going to think through that. But my main question is around composting and just understanding the timing and the milestones in order to do that in the right way. I saw some talk of a survey, some indicated timing, but could you kind of walk us through what are the steps that we would need to go through to evaluate that program and what is the time frame that we think is realistic for evaluating and potentially implementation?

McVey: Council Woman Strader, so great question. So, we would like to take the next year or two -- so, it's -- it's twofold. One, we would have to work with Republic Services and Timber Creek Recycling on, you know, essentially establishing those -- those rate structures and establishing are there certain matrix if -- you know, if we have 10,000 people sign up would it cost this much. If we had 40,000 people sign up would it costs this much. And, then, also look at the -- what would it cost if we just spread that across everybody and it was an everybody participates. And so we hope to have that analysis done over the next year. And, then, you know, if the city chose to move forward with some sort of program it would -- you know, we would need probably at least another year to develop outreach work with our vendors on carts, because you would have to have different types of carts and make sure that they have the infrastructure in place to -- the trucks and the staff to accommodate that. So, it's probably realistically a couple of year process to get there. But I do think, to your point, we have some things we can do in the interim to make our -- maybe our current program more robust and more accessible.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Just a quick comment. I mean it seems obvious, but besides, you know, there is a little binary of opt in versus everyone participates. There is also making it the default; right? That's always an option where when you move here the default setting is you get, you know, a composting cart for your organic materials, you get your recycling and get your trash and, then, people can opt out of that. So, there is a third way. So, I -- I just think it's good for us to keep that in mind as well.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you. I love the 20 percent goal. That's awesome and I'm excited to see that. I -- I hope that's a message that we can get out really regularly in a variety of media. So, I wanted to ask a question specifically about the recycling participation that was on the slide. It seemed like the participation rate was really high. What -- what constitutes participation? Is that there is something in the recycling bin when they pick it up? Is it like there -- there is participation and there is really the quality participation? Like half of those could really be -- you know, be mixed and, then, I assume they just toss all of it when they -- because they are not going to spend that time to separate it. So, can you --

McVey: Council Woman Perreault, good question. So, twofold to that. So, there is -- so, that participation rate is simply the number of households that have a recycling cart. So, it doesn't necessarily truly represent 90, you know, eight percent participation. So, two ways that, you know, we can kind of measure that is -- so, the -- it's called the set out rate. So, how -- and Republic Services tracks that. So, how frequently do all the carts get set out and I believe there is somewhere close to 70 percent on that. So, that shows you that, you know, probably out of that 95 percent at least 70 percent are regularly participating. As far as the -- the contamination issue of should they -- did they put the right things in there. We do have a relatively low contamination rate -- or at least it's, you know, on par with -- with industry average, so -- because that's another really important piece of messaging, because that can make you throw out the whole cart and -- and takes time and resources to -- to pull and separate that back out. So, another important education piece.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor, a follow up?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Seventy percent to me is very successful, if we are having that many set out. So, I'm happy to hear that. I think the city has done it -- and Republic Services has done a really great job of making it clear what goes in that cart. It -- when I first moved out here it was not clear at all and, then, you know, there has been a long effort in that. So, my next question is as we -- we see residential structures getting smaller, garages getting smaller, alley loads, things like that, people have less space to have carts in their home. So, how do we address some of those logistical issues?

McVey: So, Council Woman Perreault, that's -- that's a good question and it's one of the constraints that we -- we face, right, with new development as it comes in is making sure there is enough space for those carts. You know, hopefully, some of that is -- is getting the right -- the container right sizing. So, we could do that program for both businesses and residents of, you know, let's make sure you have the cart that's the smallest possible; right? So, it's easier to store. It's -- you are not paying for more than you need and it -- it can be cumbersome, right, having the multiple carts and places to put them. So, it's definitely something that we -- we consider.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: Laurelie, good presentation. Appreciate the work you guys have done on this as well. The recycling center in Vegas, is this going to be primarily in -- in plastics and helping get -- be able to use more plastics that can be thrown into the recycling stream, as opposed to being strictly thrown away?

McVey: So, Councilman Hoaglun, I'm actually going to bring -- if -- if Republic Services doesn't mind, because I don't want to misspeak to their facility. I knew there was a reason they came also.

Bennett: So, Bob Bennett, Republic Services. 11101 West Executive Drive. So, Councilman Hoaglun, yes, plastics. So, the concept is today we are challenged in the types of plastics that we can take and so what we are building is a center that we are going to ship our plastics to. They can take all members. We are actually going to clean them, ship them, put them in bollard bags and sell directly to manufacturers, cutting out brokers, some of these extra facilities and the financials of it, what I have seen, will be very positive for not just the city, but kind of the greater environment and being able to accept more plastics and that will pull a lot of this waste out of the waste stream.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor? But, Bob, real quick question. When do you anticipate that coming online?

Bennett: So, it's online now. It's about when they can start accepting more plastics from us. They are, obviously, starting in Vegas, but we are already working with Western on how we start putting stuff on rail and bailing it and railing it down there. We are working on that -- those matrix as we speak.

Hoaglun: Thank you. Appreciate it.

Cavener: Well, I think Councilman Cavener can speak to some of the cheap air fares in case we are going to do it that way, too.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: And just one more question. You know, I -- what I appreciate -- first a comment. What I appreciate about our rate structure is that we are rewarding people for generating less waste and I really think that is the direction we need to go ultimately. Just maybe planting a seed around -- if there has been a thought -- you know, it's pretty rare, but there is a trend, a small trend, for people adopting more of a zero waste lifestyle. I think we are seeing it with younger folks. It is not realistic for the vast majority of families, but there are people that are trying to generate less waste and particularly seniors I think are able to do that as well pretty effectively and different groups of people. Has there been a thought around having like an ultra low waste option or, you know, in addition to having the smaller car, maybe like a less frequent pickup option for people? That was just kind of a -- a thought I had.

McVey: So, Council Woman Strader, I -- I don't believe that we have that currently, but I think that's a great thing we could include in our rate structure.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: A follow-up again for comment, Laurelie, I -- I think, one, your trash to treasure program is -- is a great one. I -- I like -- I think you are doing that -- that reduction and reuse is a great idea. Mixed yard waste, been mentioned already. You know, because our -- our yard -- we are in the same situation where we -- we compost our grass. We put it back into the lawn. It's full of nitrogen. It works well. But, then, there is the rest of the waste that comes -- tree limbs and whatnot. So, having that ability to put that out is I think huge. I think the potential -- I think Council Woman Strader mentioned that, that there is -- there is a big opportunity there just to -- to go to that expanded yard waste, as opposed to just grass clipping. So, keep pursuing that one.

Simison: Council, any additional questions? Okay. All right. Thank you very much.

ORDINANCES

11. Ordinance No. 23-2021: An ordinance (Prairiefire Subdivision – H-2022-0053) annexing the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township 4 North, Range 1 East, Boise Meridian, Ada County, Idaho, more particularly described in Exhibit "A"; rezoning 3.16 acres of such real property from RUT (Rural Urban Transition) to R-8 (Medium-Density Residential) zoning district; directing city staff to alter all applicable use and area maps as well as the official zoning maps and all official maps depicting the boundaries and the zoning districts of the City of Meridian in accordance with this ordinance; providing that copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the Ada County Assessor, the Ada County Treasurer, the Ada County Recorder, and the Idaho State Tax Commission, as required by law; repealing conflicting ordinances; and providing an effective date

Simison: With that we will move on to Item 11 under Ordinances. Ask the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 23-2021 by title.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. It's an ordinance related to Prairiefire Subdivision, H-2022-0053, annexing the southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township 4 North, Range 1 East, Boise Meridian, Ada county, Idaho, more particularly described in Exhibit "A"; rezoning 3.16 acres of such real property from RUT to R-8 zoning district; directing city staff to alter all applicable use and area maps as well as the official zoning maps and all official maps depicting the boundaries and the zoning districts of the City of Meridian in accordance with this ordinance; providing that copies of this ordinance shall be filed with the Ada County Assessor, the Ada County Treasurer, the Ada County Recorder, and the Idaho State Tax Commission, as required by law; repealing conflicting ordinances; and providing an effective date.

Simison: Thank you. Council, you have heard this ordinance read by title. Is there anybody that would like it read its entirety? Seeing none, Clerk will call the roll.

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, I think we need a motion.

Simison: Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize. Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: I thought we had changed it again. I move that we approve Ordinance No. 23-2021.

Overton: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second to approve Item No. 11. Is there any discussion? If not, Clerk will call the roll.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

12. Per Idaho Code 74-206 (c): To acquire an interest in real property not owned by a public agency and 74-206A (1)(a): To Deliberate on a labor contract offer or to formulate a counteroffer.

Simison: Next item is Item 12.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: I move that we go into Executive Session per Idaho Code 74-206(c) and 74-206-(a).

Borton: Second.

Simison: (a)(1)?

Hoaglun: (1)(a), yes. (a) -- 74-206(a)(1)(a). Thank you.

Simison: Second -- second agree?

Borton: I think so.

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

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (5:29 p.m. to 6:47 p.m.)

(Motion to come out of Executive session: Hoaglun. Seconded: Perreault.)

(Motion to adjourn: Hoaglun.)

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 6:47 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

____________________________________ ______/______/______
MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

____
CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK