

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 6:07 p.m. Tuesday, July 29, 2025, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Other Present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Tracy Basterrechea, Kris Blume and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Liz Strader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Whitlock
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anne Little Roberts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Overton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doug Taylor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Luke Cavener
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, we will call this meeting to order. For the record it is July 29th, 2025, 6:07 p.m. We will begin tonight's special City Council meeting with roll call.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Simison: Next item up is the Pledge of Allegiance. If you would all please rise and join us in the pledge.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

COMMUNITY INVOCATION

Simison: Next up is the community invocation, which tonight will be delivered by Jennifer Cavaness-Williams. If you would all, please, join us in this community invocation or take this as a moment of silence and reflection. Jennifer, good evening

Cavaness-Williams: Oh, my God. Oh, my God. Unite the hearts of thy servants and reveal to them thy great purpose. May they follow thy commandments and abide in thy law. Help them, Oh God, in their endeavor and grant them strength to serve thee. Oh, God, leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of thy knowledge and cheer their hearts by thy love. Verily thou art their helper and their Lord.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Thank you very much. Next item up is adoption of the agenda.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move we adopt the agenda as presented.

Strader: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

PUBLIC FORUM – Future Meeting Topics

Simison: Next up is Public Forum. Mr. Clerk, do we have anyone signed up under Public Forum?

Johnson: Mr. -- Mr. Mayor, we do. First is Jen Card.

Simison: Okay. Good evening. You will be recognized for three minutes.

Card: I'm sorry?

Simison: You will be recognized for three minutes

Card: Okay. Do I need my name and address that kind of thing or --

Simison: I don't believe so. I don't think it's required under --

Johnson: Can you move the microphone down to you? Thanks.

Card: Okay. I live in the Paramount Subdivision backed up right to the Orchard Park development. I have owned a house in there for 20 years and what's happening back there is awful. I have a lot of documentation and my -- I -- and I have a video, actually, that we are going to show with -- the dirt is unbelievable. I mean I can't even explain to you. I -- my house is stained dirt. They can't get it off. It was 400 dollars just to do that. I have done my windows. Dirt is literally seeping in through my window frames. I mean you clean your house and you turn around and it's dirty the same day and this part of it, the video that he is going to show up there, are the landscapers. This is the path behind the development and the landscapers were upset and decided to come right at me with their blowing dirt and this is how dirty the path is. Imagine the dirt everywhere else. There are no water trucks out there. Nothing's happening. I -- one of the heavy equipment employees I stopped them one day trying to say, hey, you know, can you guys get the water truck moving and he is like, nope, sorry we can't. We are short staffed. So, somebody has to get off the heavy equipment to be able to get up and run the water truck and they can't do it. I'm like I get it. It's not your fault. You are doing

your job. Landscaping. They said that they had a water truck that they rented to do the job and they ran out of time on the water truck, so they just gave the water truck back. And if the path is this bad imagine what it is when they pull out the eight foot weeds. There are weeds taller than me out there. There is garbage. I have pictures of garbage hanging from trees, the big plastic wraps that they use to undo all their materials and, yeah, it's -- it's pretty bad. There are floods. I have heard the code enforcement person saying that, yep, we are going to open a ticket on that. But there is absolutely nothing happening with West Nile. That's another issue as well. And just because -- got an e-mail last night basically saying that since the Mayor's office didn't know this was happening that it really kind of doesn't count is how it kind of came across to me and that's not true. There have been residents right and left calling this office for over a year. I know it, because I have been one of them, and absolutely nothing's been done. And it's the communication that you need to work with -- with the employees in the city to get that straightened out, but the residents shouldn't have to have the repercussions of that. So, any documentation or anything that anybody wants -- I have videos. I have pictures. I have text conversations from the developer that actually originally worked on approving this, saying if it's that bad they need to be fined and I'm at -- I can do screen prints of every single page.

Simison: Thank you very much.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I know where -- Jennifer, I just want you to know -- because this isn't a -- a noticed item Council can't engage in asking questions or seeking further information. This is an opportunity for us to know what's on our community's minds and, then, the Mayor's office and Council can discuss maybe future meeting topics, but --

Card: Absolutely. I will be back.

Cavener: I just -- I want you to -- I wish that we were allowed to ask questions, because I have a lot and I appreciate you being here tonight.

Card: Well, the city has access to a lot of the photos and different things already, so perhaps you could get it that way.

Cavener: Thank you. Thank you for being here.

Simison: Thank you.

Card: Thank you.

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, we also have Sally Reynolds.

Simison: Good evening, Sally.

Reynolds: Good evening. And I do have a picture. Thank you so much. Good evening, Mr. Mayor, Members of City Council. Just to start Sally Reynolds, 166 Bacall Street. So, I have been involved with the Orchard Park Sagarra Subdivision since 2019 and construction on the residential portion has begun and I would like a future meeting topic to review what was approved for this development versus what is being built, as well as asking for a review of Meridian city policies on what recourse residents have during the construction phase of a development. So, the Sagarra Subdivision already skirted the R-8 city zoning laws by requesting a PUD with next to zero sub text. Now, they constructed a four story building that sticks out like a sore thumb right next to the Meridian library. When originally presented the development was supposed to feather from one story homes to two story duplexes to three story townhomes. However -- and residents were assured that anything above the height restrictions would be accessory use only, like air conditioning units and such. But, instead, the builder received approval for the additional height through the city for a fourth story because the rooftop access fits with -- and I quote -- city design standards and stayed within contemporary theme for the overall development. End quote. So, an additional story and height above what was approved is a major deviation from what residents were told and shown would be built. I had a great view from my second story, but not even my 20 year old trees can cover up that building -- that structure. The City Council should discuss a mechanism or clause to include in development agreements where the City Council is informed about updates or changes that happen at the director level. I understand it would be overwhelming to do this on every single application, but for those applications where the -- where the public has weighed in heavily I think it's prudent for our representatives to stay informed. Furthermore, this developer has not been a good neighbor during construction. Home Depot offered my friend and her neighbors a free pressure wash after they were done with construction and while I don't expect that I do expect developers to abide by the minimum standards of not damaging property, keeping noise and dust pollution to a minimum, not creating safety hazards through the placement of construction materials and overgrown weeds. But all of that has happened with this builder. The fence was damaged when the canal was rerouted and landscaping gravel pushed right up against it. They start machine engines on large construction vehicles parked right behind residents' homes well before the appointed start times. There are rotting hay bales, unsightly objects, overgrown weeds that block driving sight lines, especially for our Rocky Mountain drivers. There was a pile of gravel a third the size of a car -- the size of a car. It was dumped in the road making Bergman a one lane road for over a month. The biggest infraction has been the uncontrolled dust and pollution that Jen has so meticulously documented. I have only seen water trucks out there twice. So, I respectfully request that any permits be temporarily halted on this development until the city has -- Council has time to review in a future. Thank you.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Public Hearing regarding Potential Ballot Question Concerning a Levy to Provide Funding for Firefighters, Police Officers, and a Prosecution Unit

Simison: Thank you, Sally. Okay. With that we will move on to our Action Items this evening. The first item up is a continued public hearing regarding potential ballot question concerning a levy to provide funding for firefighters, police officers and a prosecution unit. Mr. Clerk, do we have anybody signed up in advance to provide additional testimony -- provide testimony?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, we do. First is Ken -- or sorry. First is Ken Freeze.

Freeze: Good evening, everybody.

Simison: Good evening.

Freeze: My name is Ken Freeze. I live at 195 East Roslyn Drive in Meridian. First of all, I want to say that I am in favor of the levy. I think we really undervalue our police officers, our firefighters. I think they are very important to our community. However, I have talked to a lot of people who are not in favor of it, largely because they have already seen the assessments on their homes go up a lot -- an awful lot for some of them, so that means they are paying higher taxes and now they see this levy coming in and they are also seeing down the road, gee, I'm going to get this levy, plus I will probably get a higher assessment this next year, so it will be kind of a two -- double whammy. My question for the Council, though, is you can't help but notice there has been a lot of building going on in Meridian, which I would think would also mean that there is a lot more property taxes coming into the coffers. Why isn't that money available to be paying for the -- for this extra cost for the police officers and the firefighters? Where is that money going? That's one of the things that I have heard from a couple of people and I kind of wondered myself, because there has been a lot of building, which means there is a lot of tax money coming in. Again, those are my two comments on it and that I gave some written comments and I asked some of these same questions and I never got any answers from the written comments either. But, again, I want to reiterate that I am in favor of the levy, but I know a lot of people aren't. They see that they are -- everything around them is going up except for their paychecks and for me an extra 70 dollars a year or more is not a big deal, but for a lot of people it is and I just wanted to speak for them. Thank you.

Simison: Council, questions, comments, answers to questions? I'm happy to provide some as well, but Council --

Cavener: Mr. Mayor, please, go ahead

Simison: I think the first thing that maybe you can go back and tell your neighbors, just because your assessment goes up doesn't mean your taxes go up, because if everyone's assessment goes up then -- that your taxes really don't change. That's --

that's the general way that it works in that context. But if your assessment goes up higher than your neighbors, their tax might go down and yours might go up. That would be them. That's the -- that's the base -- basis of everything. So, assessments don't necessarily equate to higher taxes. They can, but you don't know that until everyone's budgets are all done and through that process. The new growth question. I mean we don't get as much from new growth as we used to because our levy is so low, because your property values have gone up and our budget hasn't risen at the same rate as your property values has. The assessments that we receive on that house that used to provide, as an example, a hundred dollars, we now get -- see 50 dollars for every hundred thousand, compared to a hundred dollars per hundred thousand, plus our costs have gone up. So, then, on top of that we only get 90 percent, because of the law that was put in place. So, we get 90 percent of something that we used to get -- where we used to get a hundred dollars, now we actually only get 40 of that hundred dollars and a police officer that used to cost 50,000 now cost a hundred thousand.

Freeze: Right. And I understand that. I think -- as I said I think we undervalue them and I know I have -- I have read about how some of the police officers are going to other local areas where they are getting paid a little bit more and I don't blame them a bit. You have to -- you have to support your family and you have to do what's best for your family.

Simison: The short answer is new growth doesn't cover things the way it used to. That's -- that's the shortest answer,

Freeze: Okay.

Simison: But it's a much more complex issue that's hard.

Freeze: Okay. Good answer. Thank you.

Cavener: Councilman Cavener, anything that you wanted to --

Cavener: You touched on items I was planning to touch on.

Freeze: Okay. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you.

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, next is Terry Dennington.

Dennington: Yes. My name is Terry Dennington and I reside at 4581 West Big Creek Street in Meridian. Mayor Simison and Council Members, I actually did testimony to the levy a few weeks ago, but I wanted to make some other comments regarding what's on the agenda this evening. My concerns were having these monies that were going to be in perpetuity, but may not be used for police, fire and for the legal department. That was my concern at the time. I really appreciate looking tonight at the fact that you have a

resolution -- another resolution that is addressing that. I know it's not going to be in stone that -- that that possibility can't -- in the future it can happen that you can use those monies for other things, but I appreciate that at this point in time that resolution will designate those dollars for police, fire and for the legal department. So, I really thank you for doing that, looking at that and we will see how that all turns out this evening as you guys vote on those resolutions. Another comment is that I did -- I was talking with one of the fire -- fire department people and I think in talking to the public about understanding that the majority of -- I shouldn't say the majority -- let's say 60 percent of the calls that the fire department -- department gets are medical calls, you know somebody slipped and fell, something like that, rather than for an actual fire or a major emergency. So, trying to figure out how we can educate the public on understanding that aspect of that -- these numbers -- that these monies that we want for the safety and for the growth of our community as we see it growing out there and developments going out, where we need more and more coverage and the time that it takes to get out there is how do we educate the people on that to make sure that they understand that each one of those times that the fire department is sent out for something like that they -- that maybe that can be deterred another way by education. So, that's my input for tonight.

Simison: Thank you, Terry. Council, any questions? Thank you very much.

Dennington: Thank you.

Johnson: And, Mr. Mayor, that's everyone who signed up.

Simison: Okay. That's everyone who signed up in advance. Is there anybody who would like to provide testimony on this item? Ralph.

Chappell: I tried to send an e-mail and I was a miserable failure, so I have to read it. My name is Ralph Chappell. 1899 South Swan, Meridian. In the name of progress the city has been living above its means of revenue income. The Council has been approving the applications for housing. With that comes the need of services. The builders are happy to oblige. Yes, they pay upfront fees and get the okay to build the apartments and houses and as they have done their job it is up to those of us that have been living here to pick up the new services and pay and pay. I have a limited income. I must live within my means. I do not have ability to go to my sources of income and say, hey, I need more money. Unlike the city has been relying on the federal government to pay for the firemen and policemen, now the federal government is not going to pay anymore and the city wants those of us in -- those of us to pay for the new development. Sorry for those of us on a very limited income to pay for developments in the name of progress. I for one do not have the necessary resources to pay anymore. The levy will never go away. This doesn't have a sunshine clause. I urge you to vote no on this matter. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any questions or comments? Is there anybody else present who like to provide testimony on this matter? If you are online and would like to

do so use the raise your hand feature. Council, I'm not seeing anybody online raising their hand to provide comments and no one else from the public is coming forward at this time. So, I would ask for what you would like to do as pertains to this public hearing.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Real quick before we get to kind of some of our action items tonight, Mr. Mayor, I want to thank and commend you for coming back from a family vacation a little bit early to be able to chair and be at this meeting. I know we had to kind of fit a square peg in a round hole to make this work for everybody. So, I appreciate that.

Simison: My daughter says she expects breakfast delivered to her tomorrow morning for getting up so early.

Cavener: I think we have got a DoorDash in this town. I'm happy to help. Council, we have -- we have embarked on something that's kind of new for us and I really want to commend all of you. We have really tried to be two ears and one mouth through this process, invite public testimony through a variety of different mechanisms, multiple public hearings, again, because we have been able to act legislatively I know that many of you have met with different neighborhood groups and organizations and have talked about this to seek feedback. Regardless of where our decision goes I really commend all of you for going through a very proactive, very neighborly based process. But I do feel that at least we have concluded the portion of our public hearing and so with that, Mr. Mayor, I would move that we close the public hearing regarding potential ballot questions concerning the levy to provide funding for firefighters, police officers and a prosecution unit.

Strader: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

RESOLUTIONS [Action Item]

- 2. Resolution No. 25-2528: A Resolution Calling a Levy Election to be Held on November 4, 2025 Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-802(1)(g); Designating the County Clerk of Ada County as the Administrator of the Election; Approving the Form of Ballot; Approving the Form of Notice of Levy Election; Directing the City Clerk to Convey the Form of Ballot and Form of Notice of Levy**

Election to the County Clerk of Ada County; Designating the Ada County Board of Commissioners as the Canvassing Board; and Providing an Effective Date

Simison: Next item up is Item 2, which is Resolution No. 25-25-28. Ask the clerk to read this Resolution by title.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. It's a resolution calling a Levy election to be held on November 4, 2025, pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-802(1)(g); designating the county clerk of Ada County as the administrator of the election; approving the form of ballot; approving the form of notice of levy election; directing the City Clerk to convey the form of ballot and form of notice of levy election to the county clerk of Ada County; designating the Ada County Board of Commissioners as the canvassing board; and providing an effective date.

Simison: Thank you. Council, you have heard this resolution read by title. Is there anybody that would like it read in its entirety? Seeing none, do I have a motion that will, then, lead to discussion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I move that we approve Resolution No. 25-2528 resolution calling a levy election to be held on November 4th, 2025, pursuant to Idaho Code 63-802(1)(g).

Overton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 25-2528. Is there discussion on the motion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: I'm happy to weigh in and at least maybe get the conversation going. When this first idea was kind of bandied about I wasn't very enthusiastic and, to be honest, I'm not incredibly enthusiastic about this necessarily right now, but one of the things that I think is really important is that this is not authorizing the levy. This is an opportunity for us to engage our public and seek their feedback on this particular issue and that's something I think Meridian does really really well. I think we tried really really hard to communicate the public to invite feedback. I know all of us have engaged feedback, again, to my earlier comments in different manners and I have found that to be incredibly rewarding to have opportunities to have one-on-one conversations or group conversations and should we vote to authorize this tonight I don't think that those conversations end. I think that it's important for us all as City Council Members to meet

with our constituents and talk about what this is, really with nothing to prove and nothing to gain, something the city's done a really great job. I go back to -- my grandpa loved Dragnet and it was always, you know, nothing but the facts, ma'am, and I think that's something that we will continue to do really well is provide the facts, the whys and take the hard questions from our community and ultimately the choice is theirs when it comes to this and I'm one that will respect the decision of the voters, like we do with all decisions they make and so I -- I appreciate the process that the city has went through. Mr. Mayor, you and your staff have provided ample materials to the public and have I think done a very very admirable job of getting in front of the media, so that our residents are aware of the decision that we are making tonight. They have no doubt that you will continue to do that should we vote for this as we move towards election day.

Simison: Thank you. Is there further discussion?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I would -- I would refer to my previous comments in the last two hearings that we have had and I would like to address Ralph's comments, because one of the things that's been really frustrating for me since the passage of the 389 bill by the legislature is the realization that growth is not paying for itself and I think it's really important for us collectively to acknowledge that. I know you acknowledge that, Mr. Mayor, in your State of the City address and I thought that was really important, because we have seen a change and, you know, depending on whether you are looking at current estimates or a little bit forward looking, but certainly the City of Meridian is missing well over a million and a half dollars of ongoing revenue that we would have received from some of these new construction projects and it's very frustrating. So, you know, that informs my decision making going forward. I'm sure people have noticed me -- I already am notorious for being very tough on -- on new projects, but it's tough -- this is a tough environment and I would just urge -- urge the voters to do their research and make the decision that's right for them and like Council President Cavener mentioned, I really respect centering the voters in the driver's seat on this one and I think that's the right thing to do. So, I am in support of this this evening and I also want to compliment some of my fellow Council -- Council Members for the additional resolution that they put together specifying the purpose of the funds. I think that was a very helpful addition. At least it puts us in the right I think mindset with this. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you. Any other comments?

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: I made a lot of comments in the past couple of public hearings pretty adamant about my support for moving forward with this and the reasons why. Just didn't land on our doorstep as a solution to the problem due to issues caused by the City of Meridian. We are looking at issues that were created by well-meaning people in our state legislature where our new construction doesn't pay for the new growth and we are just one of many cities -- I consistently am reading city after city after city that is having the same problem we are trying to develop their own solutions for how they move forward with a lot less revenue. I think this is one of the smarter solutions to move forward focusing this strictly on our public safety, focusing on our police, our firefighters, finally getting our own prosecution unit that works just for us that handles our misdemeanor cases, our citation cases for the City of Meridian, something that we have wanted to do for a long time. I know it's a big ask. I'm hoping that as Council President Cavener said that we will make ourselves available whenever, wherever to answer questions, whatever type of forum needs to be done. We owe it to the citizens of Meridian to be there to answer those questions and be able to explain how this works and why we are in this position. As I have stated many many times before I will be supporting this tonight.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: So, the only thing I have said publicly about this so far has just been that I surveyed my constituents, tried to get some feedback, found that the majority of them were fairly supportive of it and supportive of taking the question on, but I would like to maybe share some of my own thoughts about the process, kind of where my head is at this -- at this point. I will be supporting it tonight, but I'm frustrated that we are in this situation and I think when you read the resolution you get a sense that it's maybe one -- you know, the legislature's passing House Bill 389 is -- is the primary purpose -- or the one of the primary reasons we are here and I -- I agree with that, too, up to a point. There is other factors at play. It's a complicated situation. Things from double digit inflation for a few years after COVID spending to bringing online a couple of fire stations in 2023 and accepting the SAFER grant having the federal monies that sort of accelerated that, bringing on additional firefighters. There is more to it. This is not a simple process. There is more to it than that. But I'm frustrated that these things have brought us to this point where we are asking the citizens of Meridian to give us more. We are asking for more potentially so that they can have the level of service that we would think that they would like and they get to weigh in on that. I support the concept of four person teams. It's -- I have done some research. It's clearly the safest thing. I do believe it will save lives. It will save -- if it's one life it will be worth doing. And so I wish we could have grown into it in a way that we could afford it, but I don't -- I don't say that to criticize any well-intentioned decisions that this -- the city has made before, because I believe everyone meant to make the best possible decision that they could. So, where are we right now? We are faced with a situation with our fire department where we either considering maybe laying off firefighters or asking for the resources to keep those services where they are at. I think when we extend an offer to ask a dozen

or more people to come join us and make a commitment to the city and the citizens, I think we, then, have an obligation to show our commitment back. I think that's the right thing to do. People have devoted their life and a career to the city. I think it's only worth considering how we might return that favor. Let me speak a little bit now for the law enforcement perspective here. You know, what makes this country great is the freedoms and the rights that we have that are enshrined in our Constitution. That Constitution, what it really does is it -- it makes it clear the limits of government, what it can and cannot do. So, one thing that's really peculiar about law enforcement is that it has the opportunity to, then, for -- even for a period of time deny someone those rights and freedoms that they enjoy, even if it's for a night, a week, a year or a lifetime, there -- these are very serious matters and so when that job is done poorly people's Constitutional rights can be violated and I think that's totally unacceptable and that's why really it's a high priority to have good leadership, good training and to attract high character people to the position to make sure that job -- job is done right, because law enforcement is not just those who can deny Constitutional rights from people, but in a sense they are also guardians of those Constitutional rights for our citizens and so it's obvious competitive pay, a good place to work is going to attract better leadership, better training, resources and people of high character that we think can do the job. By extension with prosecutors, also law enforcement, but in particular we rely on their judgment, their training to consider crimes and how we may want to prosecute it and what's fitting to, then, again, deny someone their Constitutional rights and -- and privileges that they have. So, I think and in particular prosecutors also protect the rights of victims especially. That's where those -- their voices are heard and so when you consider that it -- it's -- to me it's a compelling argument that this is a question to put forward to say is this what we want in the city? Are we willing to pay for that? Are we willing to do that? I no longer want to contract out our obligation and prosecution services to a city whose political leadership, frankly, picks and chooses what laws they want to follow and not follow and so, you know, I'm going to support the resolution tonight to bring the question to the people, let them weigh in on it and, then, as Councilman Cavener said, I will respect their decision. We will have some tough decisions if they choose not to have it -- some very tough decisions and I imagine some people will say why are you doing it? But that's -- that's what we will do. We will take our instructions from the people and we will follow through with that.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: I will be supporting the resolution tonight and, first, I just want to say thanks to you and to other Council Members for the due diligence that's gone into this, as well as to our departments that have really I think left no stone unturned as we have talked about this issue. I mean I have only been on the Council for a little over a year, but a year ago in the budget process I recall we cut about a million dollars out of the -- out of the ongoing budget. We made a hard decision to take foregone. That was to, again, address what we saw on the horizon and -- and so we have done the due diligence and staff has evaluated everything that needs -- that we see on the horizon and what our

needs are to address those -- those issues that we see on the horizon down to the penny and the resolution itself is -- is to ask the voters to approve a levy of \$5,018,125.71. To me that speaks of -- speaks volumes of the fact that we have done our due diligence. We know what our needs are and we have put out -- you have given us the opportunity to -- to hash this over and to hear from the public now I think at three different public hearings and -- and take their comments through the -- through e-mail and into the Mayor's office and -- and I think we have had an opportunity to -- to work this over and understand it. I just want to say thanks to those that have put all of the effort to get us where we are today, so that we have a -- a workable solution on the table in front of us and that we can take that to the voters and ask them do they agree. And if they agree, then, we are able to address the issues for the future. As Councilman Taylor said, if they don't, then, we have some hard decisions ahead of us. But I am a hundred and ten percent comfortable asking the voters their opinion and working from their feedback. So, I will be supporting the resolution tonight.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, I will be supporting this as well. As I have chatted with the public and our citizens, their main concern has been the continued safety of our amazing community. We have got a beautiful community. There is a reason that people want to live here and safety is their main concern to continue to live in this very safe environment that we have and so the majority of people that I have been talking with are in support of it and they are very very appreciative, as am I that it's taken us lots of conversations, lots of due diligence to get to this point. This has not been an easy decision on any of our parts. We have gone back over the budget, getting this far, working both with the budget and with the levy to try to maintain the services that we provide for our community and getting this out to the voters I believe is -- is the best possible solution for us to -- to have the opportunity to do what the citizens want and -- and from what -- the feedback I have gotten so far and that's to be able to maintain our -- our public safety. So, I think we are on the right track in getting this out to the public to vote.

Simison: Thank you. So, Council, I made my comments, obviously, at the State of the City about, you know, from my perspective the what. I will add a little color and I kind of touched on this, but this is -- this in my opinion is not about growth. We may have been able to fund this with growth dollars had we had the same way to pay for things that we have had for the last two decades, but the firefighters -- we are adding them because of growth. These 18. These were about a service level direction opportunity. That's the best way I can describe it. We are not asking for more police officers. We are just asking to try to make sure we can retain and pay and fill our positions that we already have in our budget and we already do have prosecution, but this helps us have better -- people trained with our officers and under the direction and guidance of what the values of the city are and how we want to do this. So, I don't view this as a conversation about growth in -- from my standpoint, but if we had all the -- if growth was still where it was

and paying for things, well, we might have been able to use some that growth to fund this and we might not have gone this direction. It was clear during last year's budget process that there were challenges with taking foregone as a way to fund this and that This council through our conversation said, yes, let's ask the community and I think that this really does put us in that place to ask the community, you know, what -- what do you think about this concept? What do you think about four person staffing or as the chief said an effective response force? I think that's -- you know, really where we are, because we don't have a CLA that says we will have guaranteed four person staffing, but we will have more people on staff that gets the right people doing the right thing in the right ways with an effective response force. That's what this really provides. So, I think that from a practical standpoint and, you know, sometimes I am just practical down to the nuts and bolts that this is -- this is the way to do it and I want to say in my opinion Meridian has always done things right. Not always been right. But I think we do things the right way, you know, and if you look around the Treasure Valley, the way other people are trying to address their increased costs, they are trying to achieve their needs and goals -- I don't want to, you know, say that what they are doing is wrong, but I will say I think this is the right way to do it. I think this is the tools that the legislature has provided, the thresholds that exist. I think that even way back when people drafted these bills they said that if you are below a .0004 levy they understood that you are not going to get a whole lot of much of money to help pay for your costs. That's why they have that threshold to say once you reach over that you can't even go use this method to try to raise the funds. I'm going to give someone who wrote that bill a lot of credit, even though I have no idea who did it, when they did it, or why they did it, but there are those things in our state laws that really kind of outline this approach for this purpose and by asking the residents we will get -- we will get a good feedback into our point. I think we all agree, you know, whatever happens when we wake up on Wednesday after the first Tuesday in November, you know, we will have an idea about what that means and how that looks for us moving forward one way or the other as a City Council and as a community and we will take on that challenge whatever it is or we will take on that opportunity whatever it may be and so I'm excited to have this conversation out in the community to continue it and I look forward to being a strong advocate for it on my own personal viewpoints on this topic, because I think it is the right thing for our community to move forward and provide the services that I have heard from the community that they expect. Sorry. Super dry mouth coming back from the trip today. So, with that I will be quiet and see if anyone has a final call the question or whatever the case may be.

Cavener: Mayor, I'm happy to call for the question.

Simison: Question has been called. Ask the clerk call the roll.

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

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and the item is agreed to. Thank you all and staff that have been working on this and that will continue to work on this as giving the opportunity for the community to be educated on this topic. The work just now begins.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

3. Resolution No. 25-2530: A Resolution Concerning a Levy Measure to be Considered by the Voters Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-802(1)(g); Requiring the Revenue from the Levy Measure to be Budgeted for Specific Purposes; and Providing an Effective Date

Simison: With that we will move on to Item 3, which is Resolution No. 25-2530. Ask the clerk to read this resolution by title.

Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. It's a resolution concerning a levy measure to be considered by the voters pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-802(1)(g); requiring the revenue from the levy measure to be budgeted for specific purposes; and providing an effective date.

Simison: Thank you. Council, you have heard this resolution read by title. Is there anybody that would like it read its entirety?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Not seeing anyone wanting it to be read in full, I move that we approve Resolution No. 25-2530, resolution concerning a levy to be considered by the voters pursuant to Idaho Code Section 63-802(1)(g).

Overton: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Resolution No. 25-2530. Is there discussion on the motion?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Appreciations to our legal staff for moving expeditiously on this. I think it was really important for Council to communicate to the public that if this levy were to pass that we are very intentional about where these funds go. We recognize from an appropriations clause standpoint future councils can make other decisions, but should they make those other decisions it would be done under daylight with lots of transparency and give our community opportunities to weigh in. So, appreciate our legal staff and Council for helping to encourage this.

Simison: Are there further comments? If not, clerk call the roll.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

DEPARTMENT/COMMISSION REPORTS

4. Approval of the Fiscal Year 2025 Amended Revenues and Expenditures in the Amount of \$264,009,345

Simison: And with that we will move on to Item 4, which is approval of the fiscal year 2025 amended revenues expenditures in the amount of 264,009,345 dollars.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Having had ample public hearings on this, lots of good discussion, I move that we approve the fiscal year 2025 amended revenues and expenditures in the amount of 264,009,345 dollars.

Strader: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second to approve the fiscal year 2025 amended revenues in the amount of 264,009,345 dollars. Is there discussion? If not clerk call the roll the roll.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

5. Tentative Approval of Fiscal Year 2026 Proposed Revenues and Expenditures in the Amount of \$264,498,131

Simison: Next item up is Item 5, tentative approval of fiscal year 2026 proposed revenues and expenditures in the amount of 264,498,131 dollars.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: First time for everything. I move tentative approval of the fiscal year 2026 proposed revenues and expenditures in the amount of 264,498,131 dollars.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve Item 5 in the amount of 264,498,131 dollars. Is there discussion? If not, clerk call the roll.

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

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

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

6. Declaring the Intent to Collect Forgone Property Taxed for Fiscal Year 2026 in the amount of \$538,722

Simison: Next item is Item 6.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: In light of the Council voting to authorize the levy question, I guess that's made for unanimous consent to vacate Item 6 from our agenda.

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second. Is there any objection to the unanimous consent request? Hearing none, the unanimous consent request is agreed to and the item is vacated from the agenda.

FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Simison: Council, anything under future meeting topics?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Yes, I do have two topics, please, and I will start on the first one and, then, on the second one I will let the clerk know, because I have a brief slide that, but I think this illustrates a future meeting topic better than I could verbally. So, on the -- on the first

future meeting topic, obviously, it's no surprise to anyone that we have been hearing from residents of Paramount in this meeting and specifically my constituents in District Two. I have reviewed both of the projects, Pebble Brook, as well as Orchard Park Sagarra Subdivision. I have re-reviewed all of the public testimony and all of the meetings and materials. I believe that we need a couple of workshop sessions. I think we need a workshop session with a staff presentation on the construction phase impacts to quality of life that our residents are experiencing after we approve projects. I think that that could cover dust, storm water and fencing damage, property damage and any other topics if city staff finds that those happen frequently. I have also provided city staff with a draft of a dust and erosion resolution and an accompanied memo with some proposed UDC changes that I believe we should consider. I plan to get their input and, then, I would like to circulate that to my Council Members to get some feedback once I have some feedback from our staff. So, that's the first point. And, then, the reason I mentioned it first is to me the health and safety impacts of our residents are incredibly important and I think you could see from the video that what is going on is not okay. I will not give any more opinions about that one. Okay. On to the second topic. Mr. Clerk, if you don't mind pulling that up for me. It's just going to save us a lot of time. Thank you. Okay. On this first slide on the left this is the rendering from the original staff report for the Sagarra Subdivision. The original hearing date was on Valentine's Day 2023 and the second hearing date was three days before I had the twins. So, I think everybody will remember my mood on that day. But I have been paying very close attention to this project and I have become increasingly frustrated. Take a look at what was approved now and take a look at the right. This is what is currently being constructed. It looks like four stories. Mr. Clerk, could you, please, advance to the next slide. And this is what we are going to end up with, which to me visually at least clearly appears to be a four story structure. At least, it's visually four stories. What I would like to understand is how do we get to this point? It's not about blaming people. It's about understanding what remedies, if any, are available to us at this stage. I do believe that our City Council should do a review of what's going on with these attached buildings at Orchard Park and I would like us to understand what can be done now about this project and what can be done going forward so that we don't end up, in my opinion, with projects that the final project does not reflect our vision and our intent when we approve projects. I will also just say I highly encourage my Council Members to go and -- and especially for the ones that may not have been on the Council, to go -- go and review those meetings and take a look. There were some really stunning quotes in that meeting from the applicant themselves stating that these renderings that were presented in the staff report were not at all going to reflect what we would end up with here in this project and I'm sad to say I think it's gotten worse. So, I will stop providing my editorial and leave it there. But those are my two future meeting topics, please. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE SESSION [Action Item]

- 7. Per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(f): To communicate with legal counsel for the public agency to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal**

**options for pending litigation, or controversies not yet being litigated
but imminently likely to be litigated.**

Simison: Thank you very much. Next item up is Item 7.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Move the Council go into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(f).

Strader: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to go into Executive Session. Is there any discussion? If not, Clerk call the roll.

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

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and the item is agreed to. We will go into Executive Session.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (6:57 p.m. to 7:12 p.m.)

(Out of exec. Cavener/Strader)

(Adjourn. Cavener/Strader)

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:12 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK