

Meridian City Council Work Session

September 13, 2022.

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:34 p.m., Tuesday, September 13, 2022, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Members Absent: Luke Cavener.

Also present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Charlene Way, Jeff Brown, Joe Bongiorno and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

☒ Liz Strader	☒ Joe Borton
☒ Brad Hoaglun	☒ Treg Bernt
☒ Jessica Perreault	☐ Luke Cavener
☒ Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, I will call the meeting to order. For the record it is September 13th, 2022, at 4:34 p.m. We will begin this evening's work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next item is the adoption 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 second to -- second 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. Winco Wells No. 1 Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement No. 2**
- 2. Final Plat for Summertown Subdivision (H-2022-0018) by Kent Brown**

Planning Services, located at the southeast corner of N. Venable Ln. and W. Ustick Rd.

- 3. Final Order for Acclima Subdivision (FP-2022-0020) by The Land Group, located generally North of W. Ustick Rd., South of McMillan Rd. and directly West of and adjacent to McDermott Rd.**
- 4. Final Order of Approval for Brundage Estates Subdivision (TECC-2022-0001) by Engineering Solutions, LLP, generally located 1/4 mile south of W. Victory Rd. on the east side of S. Linder Rd. in the west half of Section 25, T.3N.,R.1W.**
- 5. Final Order of Approval for Hill's Century Farm Commercial Subdivision No. 2 (TECC-2022-0002) by Brighton Development, Inc., generally located on the south side of E. Amity Rd., 1/4 mile east of S. Eagle Rd.**
- 6. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Lavender Place Subdivision (H-2022-0036) by Breckon Land Design, Located at 2160 E. Lake Hazel Rd.**
- 7. Development Agreement (CentrepoinTE Mixed-Use H-2022-0035) Between the City of Meridian and MGM Meridian, LLC and MGM Meridian 2, LLC for Property Located at 3100 N. CentrepoinT Way and 3030 N. Cajun Lane**
- 8. Renewal of Agreement for Fire Department Communication Dispatch Services Between Ada County And the City of Meridian for Fiscal Year 2023.**
- 9. Agreement Between the City of Meridian and 1701 W. Cherry Ln., Meridian, ID Allowing a Recycling Enclosure in an Existing Utility Easement**
- 10. Appointment of Justin Northway as a Trustee of the City of Meridian Employee Health Benefits Trust effective December 1, 2022**

Simison: Next time up is the Consent Agenda.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Just going through the Consent Agenda just checking on things. Mr. Mayor, I move approval of the Consent Agenda and for the Mayor to sign and Clerk to attest.

Borton: Second.

Simison: I 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 were no items moved from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

11. Second Request for Reconsideration of Denial of Burnside Ridge Estates (H-2021-0070)

Simison: So, we will move on to Item 11 under Department/Commission Reports. That is the second request for consideration of denial of Burnside Ridge Estates, H-2021-0070. Mr. Nary.

Nary: Yes. Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, just for the record's purposes -- so this request for reconsideration was based on the amended denial. If you recall for the record that we had a request for reconsideration of your original denial. It was recommended -- remanded back simply for some corrections to be made to the -- to the document, not for reconsideration of the decision itself. That was -- that was prepared for you. That has been approved. This is a request for you to reconsider it once again. It didn't raise any new issues, but that's up to you on whether or not you want to grant the request to reconsider or deny the request to reconsider or amend it again.

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

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: After reviewing the second request for reconsideration from the applicant for Burnside Ridge, I have reviewed the decision, the findings and the minutes of the denial and did not find any error that would cause me to reconsider or remand this decision. Therefore, I move to deny the request for reconsideration.

Borton: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second to deny the second request for reconsideration. Is there any discussion? If not, Clerk will call the roll.

Roll call: Borton, yea; Cavener, absent; Bernt, yea; Perreault, yea; Hoaglund, yea; Strader, yea.

Simison: All ayes. Motion carries and the second request is agreed to not reconsider.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

12. Mayor's Office: 2022 City of Meridian Citizen Survey Findings Report

Simison: Next item is Item 12, which is Mayor's Office 2022 City of Meridian Citizen Survey Findings Report. Open this item with comments from Mr. Miles.

Miles: Good afternoon, Mayor and Council. Here this afternoon for the 2022 Citizen Survey results. I'm not going to bury the lead. We have our consultant with us Jason Morado, who is going to walk through the survey and his presentation and, then, I will come back up and we can have -- address any questions that you might have and go from there. So, with that I will invite Jason up.

Simison: Jason, welcome. Nice to see you again in person.

Morado: Yes. Great. Thanks, Mayor, Council Members. It's great to be back here. I missed coming here in 2020 because we were in the early stages of COVID, so it's great to be back in Meridian. Today I'm going to walk through the key findings from the 2022 resident survey. The four part is very detailed and comprehensive. So, today I'm going to walk through really our key findings from the survey. The arrow -- it doesn't seem like it -- there we go. Okay. Sorry. Just a quick background about ETC Institute. We are based in the Kansas City area, but we are a national leader in providing market research for local governments. We have been doing this type of work for 40 years now and in the last ten years alone we have conducted surveys in more than a thousand communities all across the country. So, this is really the type of work that we specialize in. Today I will go through the purpose and methodology of the survey, what I call the bottom line up front. Our main conclusions from the survey and, then, I will go through the major survey findings to show how they came to those conclusions and I will be happy to answer any questions as well. So, there are several reasons to conduct a survey like this. One is to get an objective assessment of how satisfied residents are with major city services and also to determine what residents feel the top priorities for the community. We are also able to measure trends from the previous surveys. This is the fourth resident survey and each time we tweak the questions a little bit, but most of the questions remain the same, so that we can measure trends over time and we are also able to compare your results with other communities across the country. So, the survey was administered by a combination of mail and online to randomly selected residents throughout the city. We ended up with 504 completed surveys. Our goal was 500, so we accomplished that. The 504 surveys at the 95 percent level of confidence has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.3 percent. So, essentially, that means that if we conducted this survey the same way a hundred times, 95 times the results would be plus or minus 4.3 percent from what we are reporting. So, the results aren't perfect, but the margin of error is small. Here we have a

map of the city. The red dots are households that completed the survey, so we had a good distribution throughout the city. This is similar to what we have had on previous surveys and we also had a good representation from key demographic groups, such as age, gender, and income. So, here are our main conclusions from the survey. We found out residents have a very positive perception of the city. Nearly nine out of ten residents rated Meridian as an excellent or a good place to live and nearly nine out of ten also rate the city as an excellent or a good place to raise a family. Overall the satisfaction ratings are a little bit lower this year than they were in 2020, but that's a trend we have seen all over the country the past couple of years and we think largely COVID related. So, it's not really a surprise, but the satisfaction ratings still remain very high. In fact, you rate above the national average in 40 out of the 41 areas that we compared. The only area that rated lower was public transportation. There is a couple areas I especially wanted to point out. One is the overall quality of city services where you rated 25 percentage points above the U.S. average. That's one of the most important questions on the survey, because they are asking residents to take into account all the services that you are providing and really give an overall satisfaction rating for how well you are doing. If the ratings are high in that area it means they are high in a lot of the other more specific areas that we included on the survey as well and, then, the area where you rated the farthest above the U.S. average is customer service from city employees where you rated 42 percentage points above the U.S. average and the top overall priorities are roads, traffic, and transportation, growth and development and education and schools and those were the top three priorities on the last survey as well. So, we found that residents -- I mentioned have a very positive perception of the city. This was the very first question on the survey. We asked residents to rate their perception in a number of different ways. There is a number of questions on the survey asked on an 11 point scale from zero to 10. So, the dark blue are ratings of nine and ten. Those are the most positive ratings. The light blue is seven to eight. The gray is four to six. So, not a bad rating even more for average and, then, the pink are ratings of zero to three. So, the blue are the positive, the pink or the red -- the pink are the negative. Obviously, the positive range far outweigh the negative overall. If you look at the top of this chart most residents gave very positive ratings to Meridian as a place to live and as a place to raise a family. We also asked residents about the quality of life in the city. Most residents feel like customer service from city employees and the overall quality of city services exceeds expectations. In fact, for customer service from city employees 43 percent feel it greatly exceeds their expectations. Again, the dark blue is a nine or a ten, means it greatly exceeds their expectations. We asked residents how they rate the value they received for city tax dollars and fees. Most residents gave positive responses. Sixty-eight percent gave a rating of seven or above, feeling that they -- they do receive good value for city taxes and fees and here we ask residents to rate major categories of city services. On this question we are asking residents to rate these areas at the big picture departmental level and, then, later on in the survey we asked about some more specific areas within some of these categories. So, once again, the positive range far outweigh the negative. The lowest rated area was planning and zoning, but even for that you have 43 percent that gave positive ratings, 25 percent negative. For most of these areas five percent or less of residents gave negative ratings. So, very very positive ratings really across the board. So, we also found that satisfaction with the overall quality of city services is high in all parts of the city. Here again we have a map of the city

and we broke the results out by census block group. So, these are very small areas. We create a map like this for every question asked on that 11 point scale. So, there is well over a hundred maps in the report. This one is for the overall quality of city services. The entire map is blue and, in fact, a couple of areas are dark blue, which is the highest possible rating. So, this means that residents in all parts of the city are satisfied with the overall quality of city services. Sometimes what happens is even if the ratings are very positive overall, once you start breaking into these smaller areas you will see some areas where residents are not as satisfied or don't feel like they are getting as good of services as people in other parts of the city. But here since the entire map is blue means you are doing a great job providing services equally throughout the city. This map is for customer service from city employees. Most of the map here is dark blue, which is the highest possible rating. There is that one area in yellowish, which isn't a bad rating, but just a little bit lower than the blue, but for the most part the ratings are very very positive all across the city when it comes to customer service from city employees and this map is for how residents feel about Meridian as a place to live and not only is the entire map blue, but most of it is dark blue, which, again, is the highest possible rating. So, I mentioned earlier that satisfaction with city services is much higher in Meridian than other communities. You rate above the U.S. average in 40 out of the 41 areas that we compared and what also stands out is you rate significantly higher in 37 out of those areas and by significantly means five percent or more above. The area that rated the farthest above the U.S. average was customer service from city employees. Eighty-three percent of respondents gave a positive rating. The national and regional average are only 41 percent and, then, another area that really stood out is 76 percent of residents gave positive ratings for the overall quality of city services and you can see the national average is barely over 50 percent. Here are comparisons for major categories of city services. In all seven areas your ratings were more than ten percentage points above the U.S. average. This includes trash, sewer, water, recycling, code enforcement, communications and traffic enforcement. Here are comparisons. For Parks and Recreation your ratings were above the U.S. average in all seven areas. For pathways for walking and biking trails the ratings were just a little bit above the U.S. average, really more on par, but the areas were -- that really stand out where you rate far above other communities are athletic fields and youth and adult sports programs. Here are the comparisons for public safety. You rated above the U.S. average in all ten areas. This includes the overall quality of the fire department, overall quality of emergency medical services. The overall feeling of safety in the city 92 percent of respondents said they feel safe in the city. You can see the national and regional average are only in the mid to upper 60 percent range and, then, also the overall quality of police services. Then for all three areas of communications, your ratings are more than 20 percentage points above the U.S. average and this chart shows comparisons for perceptions of the city. As I mentioned earlier, almost nine out of ten residents feel Meridian is an excellent or a good place to live. The national average right now is only at 50 percent and nearly nine out of ten also gave positive ratings to Meridian as a place to raise a family and you can see the national average just barely over 60 percent. So, we also compare these results to previous surveys. Overall the ratings are down a little bit compared to 2020, but, again, that's the trend we have seen all over the country the past couple of years. These are the areas with the biggest increases in satisfaction since 2020. A lot of it's related to

Parks and Recreation programming, both adult and youth sports programs. Other areas that had the biggest increases were employment opportunities. Meridian as a place to start a business and conduct business and developing a strong local economy. Here are the areas with the biggest decreases since the last survey. Several of these are related to growth, which is common for a fast growing city. How well the city is managing growth, quality of housing and variety of options and, then, development in Meridian. So, now we will take a look at the top overall priorities. Here we asked residents which three priorities should receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next three years. So, the top three priorities were roads, traffic, and transportation. Really that one stands alone as number one. Nearly seven out of ten residents picked that as one of the three highest priorities. The second and third highest priorities were growth and development and education and schools. Those were the top three priorities in your last survey as well. Affordable housing is fourth. It was also fourth in the last survey, but this year the percentage is a little bit higher than it was in the last survey. So, it's still the fourth highest priority, but emerging as a little more of a high priority than it was a couple of years ago. Here we have the important satisfaction rating. This analysis is based on two sets of data. First we asked residents how satisfied they are with services and, then, we asked as a follow up which to receive the most emphasis from city leaders over the next couple of years. So, the idea behind this is that those areas that have a combination of lower satisfaction ratings, but at the same time were the most important should be the highest priorities. It doesn't mean you should ignore the lower level priorities, but making improvements in the higher priorities will impact the greatest number of residents. So, the top priority is planning and zoning. Second is traffic enforcement. Third are police services. The satisfaction ratings for police services are very high, but it's still an area that residents rated as important, which is pretty common in most communities, meaning they want to maintain that level of service. And, then, here we asked residents which transportation improvements they feel should receive the most emphasis over the next two years. The top priority is widening roadways, followed by improving intersections and, then, shared bike and pedestrian facilities. So, that's everything that I had. Just a quick recap. We saw that residents once again have a very positive perception of the city. Overall satisfaction ratings remain very high. They are down just a little bit. But once again they are significantly higher than cities in most areas, especially when it comes to the overall quality of city services and, then, customer service from city employees and the top overall priorities, roads, traffic, and transportation, growth and development, and education and schools. So, with that does anyone have any questions or comments?

Simison: Thank you. Council, questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thanks for the presentation. One concern that I have -- I saw the planning and zoning services satisfaction score and do you have a way of delving in a little more about if people's concern about growth and development is kind of mixed in with that score or if there is a specific concern with those services?

Morado: Yeah. I think those are related, but we can also do some more analysis and -- analysis and see if there is a correlation between the two. We also dug deeper and provided some cross-tabs which break the results out by council district, by other demographic questions, such as age, number of years lived in the city, geographic area, such as the census block group. So, that's something we can look a little more into. I feel like they are correlated, but definitely something we can take a closer look at.

Strader: Thanks.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: I have four or five questions. Can I just shoot them off one after the other?

Simison: Yep. Go ahead.

Perreault: Thank you. So, a couple of questions about the -- the demographics. Did you -- I know most of these surveys get information on how long the residents have lived in the City of Meridian and, then, of course, the assumption is that they have lived in other cities, so that they can make a comparison of our services versus others. Do you have that information with you, the length of time on average that the residents were here?

Morado: That's in the full report. Yes, it is one of the demographic questions, how long they have lived in the city.

Perreault: Okay. Because I -- I think Council Woman Strader -- that we are on the same page, which is that a lot of folks don't realize that transportation is not in our control and, then, they kind of roll that in with planning as an element and so that's not something -- you know, that's the challenge with, you know, when -- when questions are posed about what priorities should the city make and transportation being one of them, we don't have any control over most of that. So, I guess, you know, the public -- even folks that have lived here a long time aren't aware that that's the case. So, I don't know how to filter these results through not knowing whether folks really realize -- you know, I have talked with David about this, so maybe you can come and clarify that for me? Thank you.

Miles: Mr. Mayor and Council Woman Strader, it's a great question and I think you are hitting --

Perreault: Council Woman Perreault.

Miles: Sorry. Council Woman Perreault. My apologies. You are hitting right at some of the heart of these questions. Jason mentioned we have got cross-tab data on how many years have people lived here, age demographics, where they live within the city, so that we can dive deeper into that question to say are they aware. We don't know if they are aware or not right now based on the information we have, but we have -- have to go back,

look through the data to say is it rational to -- to think that maybe some of these people just don't know and, then, what are our actions from that going forward.

Perreault: Thank you. I just reviewed the summary of that. So, I didn't know --

Simison: If I could just add to that, though. We do -- it is pointed out in the questions that the city doesn't do transportation, you know, so I'm not going to say that they always correlate that information, but when we ask questions we say the city does not do this topic. The city -- when we talk about our partners, how will they remember that when they are doing other things I can't say though.

Perreault: That's what I thought, because we -- we have had this discussion. So, that's what I -- I just wanted to get clarification and I see a correlation between the number of years that folks have lived here and the realization that that's the case or not the case, because they are used to coming from places where the cities do all of the services.

Miles: Yes, Council Woman Perreault. Yes. The -- the questions do say it -- again, you know, what's the brain thinking when you are taking a survey and are you reading that factor or are you more considering the question at hand rather than the clarifier. So, again, I think we have got the cross-tab data that we can dive into and take a look at that.

Perreault: Okay. Thank you. Curious about the goal of the 500 respondents. Is that -- do you base that on the size of city that we are and that's kind of the amount of respondents that you use for any similar sized city or -- it seems like all the surveys I have seen since I have been involved with the city, that number has stayed the same, even though we have grown. So, I'm wondering how that number comes to be. It seems small to me.

Morado: Five hundred surveys is a pretty typical sample size for a city of this size. We could conduct more surveys. They cost more money and it doesn't affect the margin of error a whole lot. So, for example, for 500 surveys the margin of error is 4.3 percent. Let's say you did a thousand surveys to change that margin of error of 3.1 percent. So, just about a one percent more accurate, but it would cost significantly more. So, that's why we stuck with the 500 surveys. It is a pretty typical sample size for a city this size.

Perreault: What do you mean by margin of error? What's the error being made? Are you -- I'm not understanding.

Morado: So, for anytime you conduct statistical sampling, the results are not a hundred percent accurate. You know, the only way to know a hundred percent what the results would be would be to ask every single person in the city, which is impossible. So, when you do these surveys there is a 95 percent margin of error or 95 percent level of confidence and a margin of error of a certain percent. So, in this case the margin of error is 4.3 percent. It means that if we conducted this survey a hundred times, 95 times the results would be plus or minus 4.3 percent what we report here today.

Perreault: Okay. Thank you. That makes sense now. I understand.

Simison: And 500 -- 500 can be used for a nationwide survey. It's a base mark bench level for any survey for confidence rating, irregardless of sample size, because, then, it just becomes more -- you know maybe --

Perreault: More of the same?

Simison: -- nationwide if you do a thousand that is considered -- you know, you really top it out for a nationwide survey with a thousand people.

Perreault: Okay. Thank you. That helps me understand the framework. And one more quick question. The comparison that you did with Meridian in comparison to the northwest and in comparison to the U.S., are those comparisons with, you know, similar sized cities as ours or how -- how were those comparisons -- I mean the percentage is, obviously -- it's based on the percentage of -- and how the respondents answered the question, but how are we comparing -- when we compare the northwest are we talking -- are we comparing with Portland and Seattle? Because they are going to have, you know, different cultural ideas about what cities are supposed to be doing and not --

Morado: Yeah. Those are all different sized cities. I mean there is a lot of ways we can do benchmarking comparisons. We could do it based on similar sized cities instead. We just chose to do it nationally than regionally in all different sized cities. But if you wanted to compare it to more similar sized cities that's something we could definitely do.

Simison: I -- I think one of the challenges with anything is not every city does all the same services. So, no matter what you are in, you are always going to -- even now Nampa doesn't have a fire department anymore. They have a rural fire protection district, but they don't do it. So, it's really hard in cities to find real comparisons, other than perception. Mr. Bernt? Mr. Borton? Any questions? Any follow-ups at this time? Okay. Well, thank you. If I could just take a -- take a second -- and we have appreciated the long-standing relationship and the work that you have done for us over the years and I also just want to take a second to thank the city employees. I mean these -- these numbers are pretty phenomenal when it comes to customer service and quality of services that our employees provide day in and day out for our residents and I think that that showcases well. You know, it's -- I think it's -- it's always tough. I mean you -- you -- we want to think that maybe they don't really understand community development and development services. You know, that's my hope, too. My -- my hope is that the perception of growth and development is not a reflection of the department, you know, but it is a survey and we do our best to try to take it all for what it is without cherry picking what we like and what we don't like and what we need to address one way or the other when it comes down to it, so we got to educate the community more about what community development does, so they can do it better or we do have to do more in that area. So, just appreciate it and we will look forward to future conversations with -- Councilman Borton.

Borton: Mr. Mayor, I do have one question. It's follow up to Council Woman Strader's and maybe in the next couple weeks if you are able to provide that comparison from those concerned with growth and those respondents concerned with planning and zoning services and -- and see where they overlap and also maybe note on your map, which -- if you have the data that shows the location of each respondent I'm curious where folks might be concerned on one of those topics, but not the other and where they reside. If there is some region in our community that's more concerned than others with the manner in which we provide the service versus growth related concerns that would be great.

Morado: Yeah. Absolutely. We can definitely do that. I believe we have maps for those questions already, but we also can -- can compare those two results. Absolutely.

Simison: And just so Council is aware, we talked about this a little bit at the director meeting today. Dave's going to be leaving the team, but we are pulling people from Finance, from Public Works who really know data, so that we can do some of the self selection ourselves that help identify just these exact issues that you are referring to a little bit more deeper. We only got that information in pdf form, so we will have to try to get a little bit, you know, sortable data that we could do some of the -- this ourselves. So, we will be working with them on that. These are -- the -- the numbers do suggest we -- we really need to have a good understanding to have a good conversation and potentially if there is anything the Council wants to do on any of these issues moving forward to be able to make informed direction at that time. Thank you.

Morado: Thanks, everyone.

Simison: Mr. Hoaglund.

Borton: Mr. Mayor, I move that we adjourn our work session.

Simison: I have a motion to adjourn. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. We are adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:02 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT E. SIMISON

DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK