

Meridian City Council Work Session

July 7, 2026.

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 7, 2026, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Members Absent: John Overton.

Other Present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Christina Barney, Tracy Basterrechea, Shawn Sopoaga, Brandon Clyde, Steve Siddoway, Shawn Harper and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

☒ Liz Strader	☒ Brian Whitlock
☒ Anne Little Roberts	☐ John Overton
☒ Doug Taylor	☒ Luke Cavener
☒ Mayor Robert E. Simison	

Simison: Council, we will call the meeting to order. For the record is July 7th, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. We will begin this afternoon's work session with roll call attendance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next item up is adoption of the agenda.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, I move that we approve the adoption of the agenda as published.

Whitlock: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to approve the adopted 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: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the June 16, 2026 City Council Work Session**

- 2. Approve Minutes of the June 16, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 3. Approve Minutes of the June 23, 2026 City Council Work Session**
- 4. Centrepont Apartments Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement No. 2A (ESMT-2026-0136)**
- 5. Approve Minutes of the June 23, 2026 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 6. McDermott Trunk Sanitary Sewer Easement (ESMT-2026-0139)**
- 7. Pollard Subdivision Partial Release of Sanitary Sewer Easement (#2023-019392) ESMT-2026-0078**
- 8. Centrepont Apartments Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement 2B (ESMT-2026-0142)**
- 9. Outer Banks Lot 1 Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement (ESMT-2026-0143)**
- 10. Gramercy Townhomes Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement (ESMT-2026-0144)**
- 11. Gramercy Townhomes Pedestrian Pathway Easement (ESMT-2026-0145)**
- 12. Final Plat for Windrow Subdivision No. 3, by Conger Group, located at the northeast corner of S. Linder Rd. and W. Amity Rd.**
- 13. Final Plat for PAW Subdivision (FP-2025-0028), by Kent Brown, Kent Brown Planning Services, located at 1680 W. Ustick Rd.**
- 14. Final Order for Tanner Creek Subdivision No. 2 (FP-2026-0011) by Engineering Solutions, generally located on the north side of I-84, 1/4 mile W. of South Meridian Rd.**
- 15. Final Order for Dayspring Subdivision No. 2 (FP-2026-0004) by Toll Brothers, generally located off the southeast corner of the N. McDermott Rd. bypass and W. Ustick Rd.**
- 16. Final Order for Dayspring Subdivision No.3 (FP-2026-0007) by Toll Brothers, generally located 1/4 mile south of W. Ustick Rd., midway between N. Black Cat Rd. and N. McDermott Rd.**
- 17. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Midgrove Plaza (SHP-2026-0004) by Hillside Architecture, located at 1450 E. Franklin Rd.**

- 18. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Apex Zenith (H-2026-0014) by Brighton Corporation, located at southwest corner of Meridian Rd. and Lake Hazel Rd.**
- 19. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Pollard West (H-2026-0015) by Brighton Development, generally located on the north side of W. Chinden Blvd., the west side of N. Levi Ave. and on the southside of W. Waverton Rd.**
- 20. Development Agreement (Skybreak Rim H-2026-0001) Between City of Meridian and Gemini LLLP for Property Located Near the Southeast Corner of S. Eagle Rd. and E. Lake Hazel Rd.**
- 21. Approval of New Alcohol License (ALCN-2026-0009) for The Book Lounge, LLC at 33 E. Idaho Ave. Suite 120, operating within three hundred (300) feet of a property used for a church or any other place of worship, or any public or private education institution**
- 22. Approval of Construction Contract to WRS for the Sewer Main Replacement project at King St. and authorize Procurement Manager to sign the contract and Purchase Order for the Not-to-Exceed amount of \$829,696.66**
- 23. Resolution No. 26-2591: A Resolution Approving Adoption of the Community Development Block Grant Program Year 2026 Action Plan and Submission to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; Authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to Execute and Attest the Same on Behalf of the City of Meridian; and Providing an Effective Date**

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, I move that we approve the Consent Agenda, for the Mayor to sign and the Clerk to attest.

Whitlock: 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 were no items moved from the Consent Agenda.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS [Action Item]

24. Employee Benefits Trust Update to Council with Presentation

Simison: So, we will move on to our first department report item, which is Employee Benefits Trust update and we will turn this over to Christena Barney. Thank you for hustling to get here. I know you were concerned you weren't going to make it in time, but you are here so you get to go home early.

Barney: Well, Mayor, Council, thank you for having me this evening. I did try to hustle over here so I could give this presentation. But I wanted to give you all an update on the trust. So, the trust has been looked at by the DOI and you were provided those -- those final findings. So, as we had talked about the previous meeting, the reason that we didn't give the preliminary findings was because not everything made it to the final. So, we will walk through what that looks like today. If I can get this to work. Okay. So, as I said, we will look through those audit findings. We will also look through our financials, through quarter one of '26 and, then, give a survey summary from our employee benefits survey. What you will not see on this presentation is the market analysis. That is being finalized as we speak. As soon as that is finalized we will bring it back before you. Okay. So, on the audit findings, the one thing that I want to point out here is the financial result. So, there were no adjustments in the audit findings that impacted the trust's net report assets. So, they looked through all of the information that we provided them for the trust, January 2nd of 2020 through December 31st of '24, and, then, subsequent events through the finalization of that audit. They used a modified risk focused examination approach, looking at conditions, governance, controls and -- and records. So, the important thing to also know is the department noted a high level of cooperation through that process, while identifying governance process compliance improvements for the trust. So, we were very responsive in getting them records and also responding to their findings. Some of the findings that came out of that DOI audit was the minimum surplus. You all are aware that we have to maintain that minimum surplus at all times. So, that was one of the findings that came out through that -- through the year of 2025 we were in a deficit that entire year. The other thing that came out is the premium tax filing was not filed timely in the very beginning portions of the trust. At that time we were not aware that we were subject to that tax filing. Once we became aware of it we have since been on top of that and the timeliness of that filing. And, then, just that subsequent event, just making sure that we are staying above that surplus at all times and, again, having these conversations with you bringing that before you and what that financial risk is and asking to get any infusions that we may need to maintain that surplus. So, what the trust is focusing on is moving from more of reactive corrections to providing these types of updates, so that we can be proactive in getting the funds that we may need should we fall into a deficit. The management letter that was provided by DOI did identify some governance, vendor controls compliance and

actuarial controls that we needed to improve. Again, we were very responsive to DOI in how we were going to go about that. The majority of that is amending either our bylaws or our practices during our meetings. One of the points that I want to make sure that I highlight is there was some concern about the bank and unsecured funds. That has since been resolved with the bank. We are considered a governance -- government account and so all of the funds in that account are now protected. Moving on to our current financial status. So, this slide I wanted to provide the information. It can be a little deceiving, so I am going to walk through some of the information I have some notes on. So, the 3.18 million is our assets and that accounts for cash on hand and on deposit, uncollected contributions, prepaid expenses and rebates receivable. The 2.55 million required surplus is -- does increase as our contributions increase. So, if you remember we put in place a 17.5 percent increase this last year. That, obviously, increases that minimum surplus. Any increase we incur this year will, again, increase that minimum surplus that we have to maintain. And then --

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Hi. Is it okay if I ask a quick question as you are going? So, is the cash included in the total assets or is that like in addition to -- like are the required surplus amounts -- is that like in addition to the total assets or is it included within that?

Barney: It's included within that.

Strader: Okay.

Barney: Good question. Thank you. And then -- so, if you take the two of those our total net income through quarter one is 203.6 thousand. So, looking at the reserve adequacy, which is something that the board takes very seriously and something that we monitor on a monthly basis, if you take that surplus against the minimum requirement we are at a 250,00 dollar shortfall come the end of quarter one. However, there was a legislative change January 1st of '26 that requires all plans to move to a traditional RX rebate. So, basically, what's happening is instead of the Blue Cross -- or being able to see the claim and the rebate that's associated with that RX and, then, just crediting us, they have to wait for the manufacturer to provide that refund and, then, they can provide it to us. So, it is causing about a six month lag in that. We have communicated that to DOI, they are aware and they are working with us on that. Had we received that rebate in a timely manner we would not be in a deficit at this point. We are continuing to monitor that and we will continue to monitor that as we go forward. And, then, our cash on hand, which we already discussed, is 2.1, with our ending net from our operations at just over 108.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: This might be more of a question for Finance, I'm not sure, but I'm curious going forward, because we -- we have this, you know, reserve requirement that needs to be met and it's kind of a moving target; right. And we have been -- we have just been really close on it and we have this timing issue, which is a lag and I know ongoing monitoring is definitely part of the solution, but I'm also curious like is it a situation where we just -- we need like a bigger financial buffer of some kind to kind of keep us out of that, you know, like orange light zone where we are like one percent off and we are getting dinged and even if we monitor it quarterly we might have that happen on a pretty regular basis. Like is there an answer around our reserves that needs to change to help us with that or -- I'm just curious kind of what people are thinking in terms of an answer to that, besides monitoring.

Barney: Sure. So, my personal take on this is as we go through our renewal process building that in, knowing that we are going to have that lag, so that we can maintain that minimum surplus and that's the requirement of DOI. This legislation, as I understand it, came out very late and so we didn't have the opportunity to do that when we were looking at plan designs and renewals for last year. So, we want to take that into account for this coming year, so that we don't, you know, enter into this again. Any other questions?

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: And as I understand it, the flip side of the coin is while there is a minimum amount you have to have, they won't let you exceed a maximum amount either, so --

Barney: Oh. That is correct. It's -- it's a -- trying to thread the needle for sure.

Whitlock: Correct.

Barney: Okay. Moving on to the employee benefits survey. So, we opened the survey in April -- April 6th of this year and, then, we closed it April 14th. It was sent to about 650 employees, 217 participated in the survey, so it's roughly a 33 percent, which is fairly decent. I mean we always want to see more, but it's fairly decent for a survey like this. Some of the high value benefits that came out of that is people rated medical, retirement, vacation, sick leave and vision very highly. So, that is very important to them. Some of the pain points is the medical plan design and we will get into more of that in the next slide. The deductibles, out of pocket, remote work opportunities, vendor experience and claims and RX complexity. The trust is currently looking at -- through this market analysis what -- what can we do to address some of these pain points as we look at plan design for next year. So, the overarching theme is the employees want choice, clarity and cost control, as we all do. One of the things that came out of that, if -- if we are looking at that pain point is they want more control over their medical plan and so what we are seeing is that there are some that want a higher premium and lower deductible and others that want a higher premium and a lower deductible. So, looking

at two different plan design options and possibly reintroducing the high deductible plan. We had it multiple years ago. There wasn't a whole lot of difference between the two plans and so we didn't have a large shift in the employee population. Looking at what we learned from that past experience and applying it forward if we decide to go this direction, there will be a difference between those two plans to drive some of that consumerism. So, what the trust will be working on over the next 12 months -- so, if you are looking at zero to three, we are looking at that market analysis, which is that claims and vendor performance analysis, reserve monitoring, plan option monitoring and benefits communication plan. Over the next three to six months finalizing those plan design options, revamping our benefits hub and how to guides, so getting information into employees hands and to spouses hands, so that they know where their benefits are, what they look like and how to utilize them and, then, preparing open enrollment tools. Six to 12 months is implementing approved plan changes, tracking enrollment shifts. If we do offer that high deductible plan what is that looking like? Monitor satisfaction and, then, report outcomes. And I will stand for any questions.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any questions?

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor and Christena, thank you so much. I wanted to say thank you for the presentation and thank you for your service with the trust, because I read your resignation letter and appreciate all that you have done the last six years. I do have a question though. I was curious about you saying we pay taxes on the premiums?

Barney: Yes.

Little Roberts: But we are a government entity, we collect premiums from the employees and, then, we pay taxes on them?

Barney: And I don't understand all the nuances of all of that, but I'm happy to get that information back to you, but the trust, again, being a separate entity and although government funds go into it I don't think it applies in this situation. But we have had it legally reviewed and we are making sure we are compliant with that requirement.

Little Roberts: Okay. And I totally understand that. But I would love, just out of curiosity, to know --

Barney: Absolutely.

Little Roberts: -- how many -- how much the taxes that we pay are.

Barney: I want to say it's roughly 2,000 dollars a year. Yeah.

Little Roberts: Thank you.

Barney: Yeah.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Christena, thank you and thank you for all your -- your work on the trust. Just a quick question. When you surveyed the citizen -- or the employees did they -- was there an interest in like a plan that included like a health savings account, as well with the high deductible plan or is that something the trust has looked at as an option yet or do you maybe anticipate looking at that as an option?

Barney: Typically when you -- when you offer a high deductible plan it's paired with an HSA and that's part of the driving factor. Not only do you have a difference in plan design, you have a difference in, you know, how -- your contribution structure and part of that contribution goes to an HSA to help offset that high deductible.

Taylor: Okay.

Simison: And maybe to piggyback off of that, one question. Did we ask any demographic questions to know in the respondents -- was it young employees want one version and older employees want another or was it blind and we have no idea what type of person replied in the survey.

Barney: It was a blind question.

Simison: Okay.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Can you provide that -- the survey results to the Council for us to review and read?

Barney: I believe so, yeah.

Cavener: Great. Might be helpful just to glean any additional insight out of that. So, I appreciate it.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: Just one last question. Did you ask like the overall satisfaction? Like was it -- were you pleased with -- with what people thought about the plan overall? Were there concerns that you maybe picked out from that? I'm not sure if you asked any of those questions, but I was kind of curious if you had a general sense of what employees thought.

Barney: I don't believe we framed the question in that fashion. It was more about what do you find more valuable, what do you find more important, so that -- that gives the trust tools to be able to maneuver the levers that we have to try to, you know, contain costs, but also provide the benefit that our employee population's looking for be able to recruit and retain our employees.

Simison: So, no additional questions? Thank you. And, again, appreciate your service.

Barney: Thank you.

Strader: Thank you so much.

25. Electronic Bicycle Presentation and Discussion

Simison: Okay. With that we will move on to Item 25, which is the electronic bicycle presentation and discussion and I see the captain's looking like he has drawn the straw. I won't call it short or long, but he was leaning forward, so --

Sopoaga: Sorry about that. Mr. Mayor, Council Members, good evening and thank you for having me tonight. So, tonight I'm going to talk about our e-bike and e-motorcycle safety initiative. It will be a brief overview of the initiative. I think if I went into full detail we would probably go over an hour. We are holding a meeting next week where it will go over an hour with multiple presenters. But today I try to highlight some of the main points and facts and, then, really open it up for any questions or concerns that you may have. So, why we are here. Obviously, you have heard from community members that the e-bikes and e-motorcycles have been a -- a growing popularity within our city, within the valley and, really, nationwide. From the police standpoint it has come with a lot of different challenges for us. So, some of those were, obviously, concerns and complaints about unsafe riding behaviors. The safety risks they present within neighborhoods, the roadways and the pathways. Really difficulty for some people understanding the laws and distinguishing between a bicycle, an e-bike or an e-motorcycle and, then, lastly the danger and the risks to our youth which I think one of the main driving factors for this is really reaching the parents and really getting an understanding from them as far as, hey, this is -- this is a dangerous thing that we have been dealing with. So, why this matters. This, obviously, matters because it is a community safety issue, but I think more importantly we have been dealing with -- the heavy users are going to be the youth typically from -- we have seen the youngest at two or three years old, all the way really up to 16 or 17 years old and so we really want to protect our youth and that was a driving cause for really moving forward with this initiative. So, as I said, most riders are juveniles. Many of them are operating the

vehicles -- most of them are e-motorcycles which travel at rates similar to that of a motorcycle. Also there have been serious injuries here in the valley, obviously, a recent one, throughout the nation, and we are seeing traffic collisions involving e-bikes also within our city. Like I said, parents often don't realize -- or they choose not to realize the dangers of e-bikes and some of them don't understand the laws as well as they should and so as we were talking kind of within our groups internally as we were planning one thing that we kept coming back to was the fact that most of these children -- they really don't understand the consequences of a decision that's made in a split second while they are going 25, 45 or 55 miles per hours, but as adults, as police leaders, as community leaders and really as parents, you know, we obviously do or we should and this is really why this matters to us and why we are here today. So, how we got here. From here the -- the concerns and the complaints we obviously realized we needed a plan, we needed a solution to move forward. We took the -- the lens from listening before acting. Obviously, from the first complaint -- from the first calls of service regarding or related to e-bikes we were there, we have been enforcing from the beginning, but as far as the strategy to move forward we really wanted to, you know, I guess take really the over -- overview approach to see what other people were doing and to make sure we are aligned before we actually release something out. So, luckily for us the city and the mayor and the leadership teams actually took the first step and they created the e-bike website, which has been a great reference for us and we use it often. Internally what we did as we planned this was we -- you know, we formed an e-bike committee that discussed all things e-bikes, problems, concerns and solutions and, then, really at that same time we had promotional testing for our lieutenants as part of one of the testing processes. We had them put together an e-bike proposal or a plan for a solution. So, we had seven candidates, we had seven proposals and we took a lot of the information from those proposals and incorporated it into this initiative. Our partnerships with the Ada county law enforcement agencies, we, obviously, talk with them, they are facing the same problems. We talked about some of their solutions and we wanted to kind of stay aligned as best as we could with what they were doing, because we were seeing the problem all throughout the valley and so that has been fruitful for us as well. We also didn't want to reinvent the wheel. We looked at other communities across the nation who have been dealing with this issue for some two to three years. We took ideas from them and found things that we thought would work well for us. So, partnerships. We realized early on that this wasn't a problem we were going to be able to enforce our way out of. We don't have the staffing and we don't have the resources to do it. So, ideally this was a community policing issue where we needed community input, community buy in and community participation. We knew education was going to be at the forefront of that, so we collectively tried to figure out, hey, what partnerships are going to help us reach the most people and give us the platform we need to get our educational information out there. So, some of them are, obviously, the city leadership team, our own police department. We have been working hand in hand with West Ada School District, our crime prevention unit, who has access to a lot of our community members and community groups. The community members themselves we spent hours on phones and -- and e-mails, I'm sure you have as well, hearing their concerns and, then, hearing their solutions as well and, then, our community risk reduction team -- we actually met with them last week. We were kind of

late in the game to connect with them, but we are glad we did. They kind of specialized in a lot of these campaigns and so we look forward to kind of getting their input and insight and what they can offer to enhance this. So, our plan is very basic. It's really two phases to it. The educational portion, which is the foundation of it and, then, our enforcement portion, which supports it. So, we kind of went through six steps; right? The community concerns, which we went over. Our education and community partnerships, which we are doing right now. Our first goal is really voluntary compliance, you know, can we -- can the information we provide to parents and riders reduce the risk and make -- encourage them to make safer choices. Targeted enforcement. We have operations planned and we do have a dashboard, a data dashboard, which kind of tells us what's going on, where it's going on, for our officers to really take a look at and see where we need to pay more attention to and, then, overall our goal is a safer community. You know, collectively our -- our -- our efforts leading to safer streets, pathways and parks. If not we are going to have to take a look at the plan and kind of adjust as we go. So, the first piece is education and public awareness our thought was -- with this is let's come up with a plan with information we are going to put out there and really get it to as many people in the community as possible and so, as I said, the partnerships help with that. Our first step was our social media campaign, which I think we have had about two messaging posts go out already within the past week and our PIO -- Jordan is really the forefront of this with the content. We help her out with it, but she's already got planned content coming out for really the next two months and so we are going to run with that. Our community presentations -- we obviously have one next week. We have a few more planned teaming up with our crime prevention unit to get the information out, but also to answer any questions that the community may have of us. Partnerships with West Ada School District. A big part of this is really reaching the parents and the students and getting through their communication channels, which my kid goes to West Ada, so I get the e-mails and the text messages of everything that goes on. So, realizing that, they are on board for that and we look to partner with them and get the message out. We have an educational flyer, which is probably going to be everywhere, so you are going to see it a lot. Has basic information on the laws, e-bikes versus motorcycles, where you can ride, where you can't ride and it's one page and so our plan is to hand those out at events. Also to hand them out when we provide a citation or a warning and, then, it has a QR code on there, which links directly to our city's e-bike and motorcycle web page for further information. I talked about crime prevention. We are teaming with them. They have a lot of outreach events that they do, so we are going to make sure we are present and actually producing that information regarding this initiative and, then, our risk reduction team, which we are going to have more communication with them. We are planning on meeting I think next week to see what they -- they have to offer, which I think will be a lot for us, some new ideas. So, the second phase of this is our -- our enforcement phase and, really, we are going to continue enforcing the Idaho law and our -- you know, our belief is that accountability is essential in this initiative. So, these are kind of two guidelines that we have and we have trained our officers in. They can access both of them from their phones or from their computer. The one on top basically provides information on kind of the most common codes for e-motorcycles and, then, e-bikes and so they can refer to this if they need to. A lot of them already have it memorized,

because we have been dealing with this for -- for a couple months now, but it's there if they need it. The second one we have is basically kind of our enforcement guidelines. If you read through it it kind of sections it out to -- if you, you know, contact an adult versus a juvenile, parents and a guardian and, then, some -- some tow policies or some tow knowledge if they are going to tow the e-bike or motorcycle. So, this has evolved over time. I think initially we were like if you get this you are going to do this. If you get this you are going to do this. But we realized the importance of giving our officers discretion, that every situation isn't the same and for them to make that decision on their own. They understand the intent of this initiative and so I think they are going to make the right decision whenever they come into contact. Next we are -- like most things we do we are -- we are data driven. So, this is a small picture of our e-bike and e-motorcycle dashboard. It kind of tells you everything you need to know regarding data, you know, where we have had contact, what time, what time of day, what day of week, the ages and, then, some of those hotspots there where we have had the most complaints or where we have written the most citations. So, our officers have access to this and, you know, in their free time when they are patrolling around they can focus on some of these areas. Also when we plan on doing directed patrol, we will use this as really our driving force when we do that. Some of the last pieces of this is our SRO involvement. So, they, obviously, have access to a lot of -- of the youth at their schools. In the past couple months of school they have already been enforcing some of the e-bike, e-motorcycle laws on campus and providing education. So, we are going to continue with that. Our plan is really for the first day of school for them to have a stack of flyers and hang out by the bike racks and hand those out and make sure people are complying with the laws that govern e-bikes and e-motorcycles. So, our strategic enforcement operation is basically our directed operation. We are going to have operations -- we have two planned right now pretty much through August and September where we are going to have a team of people focused just on e-bikes during specific hours, going out, making stops, giving warnings, providing citations and, then, lastly, but most importantly, just continue evaluation through this process. Is what we are doing working. Are we seeing success or do we need to adapt as we -- as we move forward and, then, pretty much lastly, really, our commitment. We can't eliminate every crash, can't prevent every bad decision, but we can control what we can control and for us that is to educate, which we have been doing and will continue to do. We will partner with parents and community members, which we have been doing and will continue to do and we can hold riders accountable, which we have been and will continue to do. For us we think if we continue with this initiative that we will find success and for us if we can prevent just one I think there will be many more. But if we can prevent one phone call to a parent saying that their child has been seriously injured or worse, then, all of this, the campaigning, the community meetings, you know, the partnerships will be more than worth it and that's really our goal is to keep our community safe and keep our youth safe. So, we are excited to push forward with this initiative and we are confident that we are going to, you know, have success with it. So, with that that's the end of my presentation and I will stand for any questions.

Simison: Thank you. Council, any questions?

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: Thank you so much. My district is a big red dot on your map and there is an absolute uproar right now in district two in north central Meridian and it's really -- we have a lot of kids and teenagers that are not using their e-bikes and e-motorcycles responsibly. They are scaring people. They are scaring seniors. We have a lot of parents that are reaching out for guidance. I think there is a lot of confusion about what is technically legal and illegal right now. I thought it might be a great starting point just to kind of go back and understand these definitions better. So, it looks like the way the law is written -- or at least the way that you displayed the information there is a differentiation between an e-bike and an e-motorcycle around the wattage that goes into the device. But my question to you is going to be what are the potential speeds? Like what are the real life speeds that you could see coming out of these two different devices?

Sopoaga: That's a -- that's a great question, Mr. Mayor, Council Woman Strader. So, for the e-bikes really they can't go above 28 miles per hour. As far as the e-motorcycles I have heard ones that can reach up to 70 miles per hour.

Strader: Okay. Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: That's insane. And so I guess part of -- you know, part -- part of the -- the concern, obviously, it looked like, if you have an e-motorcycle that needs -- that's treated like a motor vehicle. Like if you are driving one and it's not licensed and you are a juvenile, that should be illegal. Is that right?

Sopoaga: That's correct.

Strader: But we still have a situation where we could have a kid going 28 miles an hour on an e-bicycle and I just -- I want to understand what does the law say around the e-bicycles specifically? Like is it legal for a juvenile to drive an e-bike bicycle at different speeds? Is it a gap in the law? Like help me understand where that piece sits.

Sopoaga: Mr. Mayor, Council Woman Strader, I will answer, but if -- if I need more clarification I will ask the lieutenant. But as far as the law states to my knowledge -- so, the classification for e-bikes are broken into three different tiers and each tier basically says the wattage and how much the speed can go. It does not say anything in there specifically about children and -- and how old you have to be to ride the e-bikes though.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: And I think where I'm struggling -- and I think other people will, too. I love that we are educating people and we are having a campaign. I love that we are listening and learning before we legislate. I don't think that we are a city council that loves to just create new laws, but I'm just looking at this like this feels like a huge gap to me around our public safety and I do think this is a newer technology and it is shocking to me that we could have a situation where we have a child who could be going, you know, 20 -- even 20 miles an hour without a helmet on in a neighborhood and it just feels to me like this kind of tier one, tier two, tier three thing is confusing. Like I'm wondering is there a loophole? Like do we need to create legislation or an ordinance that's very simple, that says something like kids can't go more than whatever -- whatever we think is reasonable. Five miles an hour or ten miles an hour -- on any -- anything. I don't want to see you on a motorized unicycle, I don't want you to create a rocket ship in your backyard, I don't know what is coming in the future, but it just seems crazy to me that we have these kids that are -- really their lives are in danger and they are going extremely fast and I -- so, I think I -- I totally support the effort in the campaign. I just think -- I'm worried it's not going far enough I guess is my -- my initial comment.

Sopoaga: Mr. -- Mr. Mayor, Council Woman Strader, I think that's something that we could discuss with the chief. I know there is some people who do agree with you on that. That's just kind of what the law says right now as far as --

Strader: Thank you.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Captain, I appreciate the -- and I wasn't aware of the website. I had a lot more questions that were answered in that FAQ on the website, so I appreciate you kind of bringing that to my attention. I think some of my questions lie right now are about enforcement and how your department is equipped to handle current enforcement. So, I will offer it. I -- I was -- I was looking up -- we have a -- we have an e-scooter in our -- in our home. We have had it for five years, only put 55 miles on it. So, it's not really being utilized. In part because it -- it goes too fast. It goes 45 miles an hour, which is why we don't use it; right? But that's a scooter that has the ability to go at a speed higher than a lot of these bikes and a lot of these other e-motos. So, how -- how are you and your team -- if you see somebody on an e-bike or an e-motorcycle or Mr. Cavener on his e-scooter, how are you able to tell that this is how much this particular device is able to go? I mean there are -- there are all sorts of these manufacturers, both domestically and internationally, foreign based. It's got to be a challenge to say, oh, this is Bob's e-scooter and that's going to go 20 miles an hour, but the Bob's e-motorcycle can go 50. How are you able to discern what a device is able to do when it comes to enforcement?

Sopoaga: Mr. Mayor, Councilman Cavener, so for the most part they talk about pegs and pedals.

Cavener: Okay.

Sopoaga: So, the e-bikes they have pedals.

Cavener: Yeah.

Sopoaga: The e-motorcycles they don't have pedals. But a lot of it is also our officers -- we basically have a guideline of these pictures of what the e-bicycles look like, so a lot of them have them kind of memorized in their head. But for the most part we do rely on the pegs versus pedals.

Cavener: Okay. Mr. Mayor, a couple quick follow-ups.

Simison: It looks like the chief may have another addition to that.

Basterrechea: The other thing is, just for clarification, for any stop we do we have to have reasonable suspicion. So, we can't just look at a bike and go, oh, let's stop and see what the wattage is. There has to be a reason that we are actually making that stop legally, so --

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Thanks, Mr. Mayor. I wanted to ask about citations and kind of what the repercussions are for a 14 year old or a 15 year old if they receive a citation. Is it just a -- a fine? I recall at one point if you were cited as a unin -- or an unlicensed driver of a motorcycle or a vehicle you are not able to get your driver's license until you are 18. Is that still the case in Idaho law and if we -- if we cite somebody at 14 is there a fairly lengthy repercussion for that action?

Sopoaga: Yeah. Mr. Mayor, Councilman Cavener, I'm actually going to refer that question to the lieutenant, because I have -- I want to make sure we are clear on this.

Cavener: Okay.

Clyde: Good evening. How are you all doing?

Cavener: Well. Thanks.

Clyde: So, looking at the laws with those particular ones, there is going to be infractions, misdemeanors and felonies that are all going to apply based on those. So, obviously, your felony is going to be generally leaning towards an arrest or a filing within the juvenile system. Same with misdemeanor portion of it. The infraction it kind of depends on what it is, but it will generally be through the -- the juvenile prosecutor's office that will look at that. I would have to look at kind of seeing what some of the, you

know, repercussions are and how they are going to affect the driving side of that and that's something that we definitely can get back to you on as well.

Cavener: Okay. Mr. Mayor, if I may just a couple more.

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: What has been the -- has there been any collaboration with any of our state lawmakers? Again, we are not the only jurisdiction that's, you know, trying to figure out the most appropriate way to solve this challenge. But as we often see is if a -- if a local jurisdiction passes some law and the state is looking at this, they, then, will pass their own law and I think to Council Member Strader's point the last thing I want to do is create more confusion and my hope would be is that if -- if we are aware that there are state lawmakers that are pursuing some action come January, that we are working in collaboration with them, so that we are kind of hitting the nail on the head for what the state would want to do, as opposed to us pass an ordinance that changes dramatically a year from now. Can you give me any flavor for that?

Clyde: I'm going to defer this one again -- or defer it to -- to the chief. He would probably be the best one to answer that.

Basterrechea: Mayor and Councilman Cavener, a couple things. On your -- your first question also on those misdemeanors and those infractions for the juveniles. So, number one if you see -- if they are not a repeat offender they are going to get a warning and the parents will get a written warning as well on behalf of the Meridian Police Department. Also if they do get a citation they have the opportunity to work with the prosecutor to attend Alive at 25, so that that citation goes away. So, they have opportunity so we are not hammering them right off the bat, so I just want to make sure we got that clarified. And, secondly, these will be conversations that the Chiefs of Police Association will be having with our state legislature coming up. I would say this. I would caution this. We have all the tools right now to enforce what we need to enforce and just putting an ordinance -- I'm not a fluff guy, I will just say it right up front, putting an ordinance on the books just to put an ordinance on the books really doesn't serve any purpose for us and our ability to enforce these laws.

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I have a question on that.

Basterrechea: You bet.

Strader: Okay. So, let's say that we have a 14 year old and they are riding an e-scooter and they are going let's say 25 miles an hour. Would that be legal or illegal right now?

Basterrechea: On an e-scooter?

Strader: Yeah.

Basterrechea: Legal. No different than if they are riding a ten speed at 20 miles per hour.

Strader: Right. And I guess my question would be at what speed have we reached a point that it's not comparable to a bicycle anymore? It's not comparable to -- yeah, I think a bicycle. Like that -- a non-motorized bicycle. I guess I would be curious how does that stack up? Because what I'm trying to get at is like where is the real safety threshold here around these -- regardless of whether you call it a scooter, a bicycle whatever?

Basterrechea: I don't know that necessarily the real -- the threshold certainly comes to speed at a point. I believe the bigger issue that we are dealing with is the behavior on these bicycles, especially when you see four or five, ten of them taking up a roadway and that's -- that's the issue. That's your safety issue. And we have the laws to enforce that, whether they are going five miles an hour, whether they are going 28 miles per hour.

Simison: From a legal perspective, chief, if they break the speed limit on a scooter on a road that's the threshold?

Basterrechea: Yes.

Simison: Under age or any age that's -- that's the current threshold --

Basterrechea: Yes.

Simison: -- in these. But we don't have a speed on our pathways.

Basterrechea: Right.

Simison: Which is the -- which is where you could get into secondary, but, then, enforcement and everything else that comes in line with that. How do you enforce a speed on a place where you normally don't do enforcement to -- to prove. But right now it's -- the posted speed limit is what they have to stay under --

Basterrechea: Yes. If they are on the roadway, yes.

Simison: If they are on a -- if they are on the pathway adjacent to the roadway does that exclude it or --

Basterrechea: I would say this. And this is where I caution you. It is no different than bicyclists that I have seen on the green belt literally going probably 20 miles per hour as fast as they can. It's the same danger. It's the behavior that really becomes the issue for us.

Simison: And, again, I'm just trying to answer the question about the speed. If they are on the detached ten foot pathway sidewalk next to a road is the speed limit enforceable in any way, shape or form.

Basterrechea: No, it is not.

Simison: Just -- just so we are -- I just wanted to level set the understanding for people on that context. Okay.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: You mentioned one scenario where you would have probable cause or an issue with e-bikes or e-motorcycles. Can you just give me a sense of other scenarios? I mean I -- I will occasionally ride a bike and I'm just -- I want to avoid you pulling me over, but I mean what -- what are you looking for in terms of -- of these juveniles? Is it clumps of them together?

Basterrechea: It can be both; right? Do we have somebody who is riding a wheelie down the middle of a street causing a traffic hazard? That would be a reason for our officers to stop them on that e-bicycle. An e-motorcycle is easy. If it's got pegs on it and it doesn't have the proper turn signals, the proper license on it, you are getting stopped immediately, because that is a motor vehicle and it is -- has to be licensed on a -- on a roadway. It has to be licensed, insured and driven by a licensed driver.

Simison: As well as illegal on our pathways.

Basterrechea: Yes. And they are illegal on our pathways.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: For our parks director I -- we talk about pathways and in our parks. Are -- are e-bikes or e-scooters allowed at our -- on our pump track and our terrain park? Are they prohibited? Are they prohibited by park rules? Are they prohibited by law? Is it a gray area?

Siddoway: E-bicycles are allowed on pathways. E-motorcycles are not. As far as the -- the bike park, the -- they are not allowed and it's signed already as not allowed and we have -- we have placed signs earlier this year on -- in the major parks that motorized vehicles are not allowed on the -- the -- outside of the parking areas of the -- of the -- of the parks as well.

Strader: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: And in Idaho law there is no minimum age for any of these devices besides the e-motorcycle; right? Because that's -- that's another thing I'm really struggling with. It's like we might have an eight year old or a six year old that on their own they just can't go that fast and now with this device they are in danger just speeding along and there is nothing -- nothing in law that stops that, besides like, obviously, good parenting.

Basterrechea: And that's exactly where I was going to go with that. Unfortunately, what we are dealing with here, more than anything else, this is a parenting issue and you have talked about it, the -- the community sites and people complaining and all of those things, I would hope that a responsible parent would go how fast does that go and when you purchase something for your child -- I know that I would look and say how fast does this device go before I put my child on it? Unfortunately, while there are some laws that deal with bad parenting, not every law covers bad parenting. We can -- if it is a child showing risky behavior on a e-motorcycle there is the opportunity to -- actually to charge a parent under that -- under a code, so --

Strader: Wow. Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Strader.

Strader: I'm curious like in your conversations with parents how are those conversations going, too, because is it -- are the parents not aware of how fast they can go or are they not aware of the behavior? Like I -- and I know it's anecdotal, but I'm just really curious like when you are having those conversations one on one with parents what are you hearing the most?

Basterrechea: Some parents are not aware --

Strader: Okay.

Basterrechea: -- and they decide to do the right thing and not allow their children to ride it. Other parents their response is leave my kids alone, go do real police work, quit chasing kids around and quit being the no fun police. I mean we see it all over. We see it on our Facebook. We see it everywhere. There is a whole group of parents who, quite frankly, think freedom means you are free to do anything you want.

Strader: Yeah. Okay.

Simison: You know, maybe I'm going out on a limb here, but in a lot of ways that's the Idaho that I grew up in, but it's until it becomes impacting others around you in a negative way where -- you know, I have got no issue when I see kids riding their unlicensed, no seat belt golf cart gently through the neighborhood, but when you see four of them on there racing with another one in -- in behind, that -- you know, that's where you understand there is a real safety issue.

Basterrechea: Yes. Again it comes back to the behaviors are really the issue that we are dealing with and -- and we have people that they want us to chase these kids to the end of the earth until we chase a kid and they run into -- into traffic or into a car and get seriously injured and, then, the finger is pointed at us, quite frankly, not the parents.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: You hit the nail on the head, which is I don't want us to over legislate on something to be really cracked down on the .001 percent of bad offenders where for many kids these devices allow them to get to and from safely with relative ease and improves the quality of life. So, I just -- I recognize there is always going to be a balance and I know that your job is hard, because you hear one parent say leave my kids alone, you have another parent saying why aren't you going after them and both of them think that you are not doing your job. That's a hard place for you to be and I don't envy that position. I just -- I think from a -- my -- at least my perspective is I wouldn't want us to pursue things that would overly penalize those that are the -- the good actors.

Taylor: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Taylor.

Taylor: As someone who almost hit one of these kids on -- in my neighborhood about three weeks ago, it came out on a -- on a motor -- one of the electric motorcycles and they clearly didn't know the -- the rules of driving on a road, because they were not of age. It scared me to death, because we were probably half the distance between you and I and he came flying out probably 25, 30 miles an hour and also as a parent who has had two sons try to shake me down to buy them one and -- and I actually did look into it and, then, I was -- I learned for myself how fast they are. I think parents just don't know yet. It's such a new thing. I think the education campaign will be very helpful, because a lot of parents just don't know. But once -- I mean this is coming to a head in a lot of communities -- a lot of my colleagues and neighbors and friends are starting to talk about it and ask questions and you see them around a lot more and I -- I do think that's helpful and I can't help but think of what my grandpa used to always say you can't fix stupid and there is a lot of parents who might make some really poor choices and, you know, unfortunately, we can't legislate their good behavior as much as we can try to educate them on the dangers of that. So, appreciate it and would hope that as you are going down this road if there is things that you identify that the Council can do to support sort of a broader public message of education and things that we can do, I think we would all be very supportive of trying to -- to do that, because it is a -- it's a -- it's a safety thing.

Basterrechea: Absolutely. And the mayor actually brought a great point to us when we initially provided him with our initial draft of this is -- is making sure we are able to

bifurcate the difference between the e-motors and the e-bikes and -- and what those differences are for people, so -- because they tend to get mushed together.

Whitlock: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Whitlock.

Whitlock: Chief, captain, lieutenant, thank you for the presentation and information. It's been very helpful and, chief, kudos to you as part of the promotion process to reach into the -- the experience of -- of your department and gain from them some insight into how to develop this education and enforcement program. So, thanks for doing that and putting your trust in the folks that are out there and understand this problem better than any of us do.

Basterrechea: They did an amazing job and I think by the end of it the board that was watching the e-bicycle presentations were tired of e-bicycles by the end of that day.

Simison: Council, any other questions at this time? All right. Well, we look forward to many more community conversations and interactions and appreciate you all out there trying to help address this issue as best we can. Thank you.

EXECUTIVE SESSION [Action Item]

26. Per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(c): To acquire an interest in real property not owned by a public agency.

Simison: Okay. Next item is Item 26, which is Executive Session.

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: Per Idaho Code 74-206(1)(c) I move we go into Executive Session.

Whitlock: 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, absent; Little Roberts, yea; Taylor, yea; Whitlock, yea.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Simison: We will move into Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (5:22 p.m. to 5:58 p.m.)

Simison: Do I have a motion to come out of Executive Session?

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor, I move we come out of Executive Session.

Whitlock: Second.

Simison: Have a motion and a second to come out of Executive Session. All in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay? The ayes have it. We are out of Executive Session.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Simison: Do I have another motion?

Little Roberts: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: I move we adjourn.

Whitlock: Second.

Simison: Motion and second 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 5:58 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

_____ MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON	_____ DATE APPROVED
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ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK