

Meridian City Council Work Session

April 4, 2023.

A Meeting of the Meridian City Council was called to order at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 4, 2023, by Mayor Robert Simison.

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

Members Absent: Liz Strader.

Also present: Chris Johnson, Bill Nary, Todd Lavoie, Scott Colaianni, Joe Bongiorno and Dean Willis.

ROLL-CALL ATTENDANCE

<input type="checkbox"/> Liz Strader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joe Borton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brad Hoaglund	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Overton
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jessica Perreault	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Luke Cavener
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor Robert E. Simison	

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

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Simison: Next item is the adoption of the agenda.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: We are going -- we are going to vacate Item No. 24, the Executive Session. That is no longer needed. So, I move approval of the -- I move adoption of the amended agenda -- agenda.

Borton: Second.

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

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

CONSENT AGENDA [Action Item]

- 1. Approve Minutes of the March 21, 2023 City Council Regular Meeting**

- 2. Aviation Subdivision Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement**
- 3. Boise Board of Realtors Water Main Easement**
- 4. Pollard Subdivision Sanitary Sewer Easement No. 1**
- 5. Pollard Subdivision Sanitary Sewer Easement No. 2**
- 6. Ten Mile Creek Apartments No. 3 Water Easement**
- 7. Ten Mile Creek Apartments Private Rd. Sewer & Water Easement**
- 8. U-Haul Moving and Storage Sanitary Sewer and Water Main Easement No. 1**
- 9. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Millwood Subdivision (H-2022-0089) by Epic Development, located at 1975 E. Victory Rd.**
- 10. Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Sagarra (H-2022-0027) by Accomplice, located on the south side of W. Orchard Park Dr., west of N. Fox Run Way and east of N. Linder Rd.**
- 12. Addendum to Development Agreement for Dutch Bros Ustick & Eagle (H-2022- 0077) by Andrew Bowman of Barghausen Consulting Engineers, Inc. for Property Located at 3117 E. Ustick Rd.**
- 13. Development Agreement for Franklin Annexation (H-2022-0090) by The Land Group, Inc. for Property Located at 2975 E. Franklin Rd.**
- 14. Development Agreement for McDermott Village (H-2022-0056) by Boise Hunter Homes for Property Located at 3235 N. McDermott Rd.**
- 15. Approval of Design Build AIA Agreement with Evergreen Skateparks, LLC for the Discovery Park Skate Park for the Not-To-Exceed Amount of \$634,000.00**
- 16. City of Meridian/Ada County Emergency Medical Services District Station Seven Co-Location Agreement and the City of Meridian/Ada County Emergency Medical Services District Station Seven Co-Location Agreement**
- 17. City of Meridian/Ada County Emergency Medical Services District Station Eight CoLocation Agreement and the City of Meridian/Ada County Emergency Medical Services District Station Seven Co-Location Agreement**

18. **Resolution 23-2380: A Resolution approving two agreements between the City of Meridian and Ada County Emergency Medical Services District, doing business as Ada County Emergency Medical Services, for lease of portions of Meridian Fire Stations 7 and 8; authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute and attest said lease agreement on behalf of the City of Meridian; and providing an effective date**

19. **Resolution 23-2381: A resolution of the City Council of the City of Meridian directing the City Clerk to destroy and/or supervise the destruction of certain semi-permanent and temporary records; and providing an effective date 20. City of Meridian February 2023 Financial Report**

Simison: Next up is the Consent Agenda.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: We have had a request to -- to act on No. 11 separately. So, I would ask that we adopt the -- approve the Consent Agenda, for the Mayor to sign and Clerk to attest, with the exception of Item No. 11.

Borton: Second.

Simison: I have a motion and a second to approve the Consent Agenda, minus Item 11. Is there 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]

11. **Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law for Denial of Meridian OZ Apartments (H2022-0073), by Realm Venture Group for Property Located at 1475 E. Franklin Rd.**

Simison: Item 11 was moved from the Consent Agenda. So, we will turn this over to Mr. Nary.

Nary: So, Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, so we had a request late today from the developer asking to withdraw this application, rather than be denied. The impact of that is if an application is denied the project cannot be resubmitted for a year if it's substantially the same and that decision is normally made at a staff level at the Planning Department of whether or not it's substantially the same. If -- if he withdraws, then, he

can re-apply sooner than a year. Certainly he heard the message pretty strongly that the -- the -- what was currently configured wasn't acceptable. But that's really the only difference. If you deny it can't be resubmitted for a year if it's substantially the same project. If it's withdrawn he can resubmit sooner than that with whatever he submits. So, it's your decision. What we told him is we would tell you this tonight. If you would like to move it out two weeks and get something in writing from them explaining why or what their reasons or whatever you would like to hear from them as to why they want to withdraw it, we can certainly communicate that to them and have it on in two weeks. If not you can certainly take -- move action tonight if you wish.

Hoaglun: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: Yeah. I have no idea what's going on here. I -- I suspect they might be trying to do something different, repackage this and maybe work with adjacent landowners and I don't know if they are purchasing property or what, but I know it was unanimous that it was not going to fly the way it was. So, if they come back it would have to be somewhat different. So, I -- I'm willing to give them that opportunity. I don't know if they need to come back and explain anything.

Nary: Yeah. Normally, Mr. Mayor, Members of Council, Council Member Hoaglun, normally we request a specific request in writing. So, right now I think we had an e-mail from an admin at the developer's company. But I think we would want something at least a little bit more concrete than that. But normally we do want something in writing, because that requires Council action, as well to accept the withdrawal.

Hoaglun: So, Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglun.

Hoaglun: So, Mr. Nary, the -- what we would do is just kind of remove it for now and, then, set it at another -- for another meeting time for that --

Nary: Yeah. I would anticipate two weeks, just because it's a little tight to put on for next week, but we can put it off for two weeks.

Hoaglun: Okay.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Bill, if they were -- even if they were still to reapply, they would have to go through the traditional process of Planning and Zoning Commission, neighborhood

meetings -- all that like it would be a new application. They just would not have to wait for a full year?

Nary: Correct. It would be a completely new application, new fees, new meetings. Yeah. Everything would start over. They would just withdraw this one.

Cavener: Okay. All right. Thank you.

Simison: Council -- I mean, honestly, I don't know how -- I think that it -- you know, personally I don't know what you could do that wouldn't be substantially different from a re-submittal. You know, if they add a secondary access, if that's all they did, would you -- would you have considered that? I mean that's still the same project, just with a secondary access. So, that would be my one question. Or do we want to get into this habit of, you know, is this a one off or is this a direction you guys would prefer to go in the future which, then, makes that one year re-submittal process -- basically you are null and void, because they could come back with the exact same project with a secondary access.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: I haven't noticed that this has been a common way for applicants to handle, you know, starting their process over. So, I don't -- I don't think it's going to start -- you know, start this -- a wave of this, but I would recommend that we perhaps look at our policy or process. My understanding is that there is no ordinance that doesn't allow them to withdraw at a particular time in the process, but maybe that's something that we consider for conversation at a later date.

Simison: Whatever you all decide.

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: Make it -- put it on in a couple of weeks, get it in writing, just to complete our process. They can make their request. It doesn't make sense. I don't know why we would not close this one out. The only reason not to is so they could re-apply in a substantially similar way, which would be wasteful. So, with that understanding they could still make the request and -- I mean that's not -- what you described as our appropriate process, get it in writing, they can officially request it, but it's -- it's up to us to act and normally we never would. We would close out the application and you are welcome to apply with something different.

Simison: Thank you for saying that the way that I think I was hoping it would come out, but it didn't.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Mr. Nary, then, up -- if -- if they come before us, give their explanation, we would still have these findings of fact in front of us to take action upon. So, if we don't find it sufficient, then, we can still deny it?

Nary: Yeah. Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council, Council Member Hoaglund, that's exactly what I would recommend. I would recommend we move this -- Mr. Johnson, do we have a meeting scheduled for the 18th?

Johnson: Mr. Mayor, Mr. Nary, we do. Yes.

Nary: Oh. I would recommend scheduling -- move it to the 18th. We will leave the findings on. I will reach out to them tomorrow and ask them to submit in writing whatever they want to do as to why they want to withdraw it and you can consider that before you, then, make a decision on this.

Simison: All right.

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: With that, if it -- if it necessitates a motion, I would move to table Item 11, the findings of fact on the Meridian OZ Apartments that was moved from the Consent and place it on the agenda for April 18th.

Hoaglund: Second the motion.

Simison: I have a motion and a second. Is there discussion? If not, in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed nay. The ayes have it and the item is tabled until the 18th.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

DEPARTMENT / COMMISSION REPORTS [Action Item]

21. Meridian Historical Preservation Commission Annual Update

Simison: Okay. With that we will move on to Item 21, which is a Commission report from the Meridian Historical Preservation Commission. Turn this over to Chairman Johnston.

Johnston: Mr. Mayor, Members of the City Council, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to come forward today. For those that don't know me, my name is Blaine Johnston. I'm president of the Meridian Historic Preservation Commission. I would like

to recognize those members of our Commission. Jody Ault. Destinie Hart. Pam Jagosh and our youth commissioner Jack Keller. We do have a couple of vacancies right now and we hope to have those filled shortly. National Registry. One of our biggest tasks is to locate those buildings, structures, places that are of importance to the City of Meridian. At the present time we have the Meridian Speedway in that nomination process. It has gone to state SHPO. State Historical Preservation Office. They have, in turn, submitted that application to the National Parks Service. NPS has some questions. They have returned it to SHPO and SHPO is at this time answering those questions and we hope to hear something sometime this year as to whether or not that nomination has been accepted or denied. May is always preservation month and we had a good -- good preservation month last month -- or last year. Excuse me. Our commission members hosted tours of historic properties in downtown Meridian. We would also like to thank the Pine Street School for their help with the tour. That is always an interesting place to go for our tours and the public really enjoyed it and we also encouraged not only the members of the City Council, but the public to download our app and they can take these tours virtually at anytime. HPC projects. We are currently contracting with the Arrow Rock Group to conduct a survey of the North Main Street area of Meridian as suggested by the State Historic Preservation Office. In September of 2022 TAG Historic Register -- Historical Research and Consulting completed the first phase of a two phase reconnaissance level survey of this area. They surveyed 134 properties during this initial survey. There are five properties that have potential eligibility for listing on the national list of historic places. They have also listed another 36 buildings that contribute to a potential historic district. At the present time Meridian has no historic districts. We had an old one -- the old Mittleider farm south of town, but that's no longer in existence. HPC projects. We are continuing our projects with Whole Films to document areas and buildings associated with the City of Meridian. These virtual tours include Broad Street, Broad -- excuse me -- Broadway Street, Pine Tree School, exterior and interior. Black Cat farm. The Meridian Speedway. The History Center. And several locations along Idaho Street between 4th and 5th. Also Highway 16. And there is a link here for Whole Films, so that the public can see that at anytime. Our social media. Historic Preservation Commission continues its effort to encourage the public to follow Meridian history on both Facebook and Instagram. Our posts highlight our history, both culture and historic buildings. Our counts continue to grow and the numbers of followers and the number of people that comment on those posts. We have received quite a few comments lately and we do our best to answer those questions that come up when they are asked. What's next? In 2023 we will continue our social media outreach on both Facebook and Instagram. We will continue our efforts to have the Meridian Speedway listed on the National List of Historic Places working with SHPO. We are exploring additional sites that may be eligible for listing and we hope by this time next year we will be in the process of a new historic registry nomination for either the Zamzows granary or other projects as recommended by that survey and, hopefully, by September of next year we will have this -- or September of this year we will have it completed. The Commission will also be looking at updating the 2014 Meridian Historic Preservation Plan as recommended by SHPO. We are in the planning process now and we will be applying for grants from SHPO to help fund this project. I would like to thank the Mayor's office, City Council,

city staff for all that they do for us. It is our pleasure to be able to serve you and the citizens of Meridian in preserving our history. Without the support we receive from the city we would not be able to do the work that we have been tasked to do. If you have any questions I would be happy to answer those at this time. Thank you so much.

Simison: Thank you, Blaine. Council, any questions?

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you, Mr. Johnston. First of all, I would like to show my appreciation for your commitment to this committee. I know it's not the most -- you know, it's not -- it's not the most exciting topic, but it's very very appreciated and an important part of our city. I do have a question for you about the Speedway. So, I know when a property goes into a historic district there is some limitation on its future use and any modifications that are made to the structure. When a property goes on the historic register is -- is that similar? Is there -- are there limitations to what they are able to do to improve the property or if the owners were to make changes does that affect them negatively?

Johnston: Yes and no. If a project -- or if a site has been listed on the National Registry -- excuse me. Mr. Mayor -- Mayor and City Council, Council Woman Perreault. The answer is yes and no. The -- an owner can do anything they want to do once the property has been listed. I will take the Speedway, for example. If they want to change out bleachers they can change out the bleachers. If they want to add a building they can add a building. The registry does not stop an owner from doing anything they want to do to that property. The no side is it may affect that listing if they substantially change a structure or part of that, then, that listing may go away in the future. But once it's listed it's listed and an owner can do whatever they would like to do to that. I hope that answers your question.

Nary: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Mr. Nary.

Nary: Mayor, Members of Council, Council Member Perreault, I can also add -- Meridian doesn't -- hasn't created historic districts and hasn't created any ordinances around an historic district, like in -- in Boise they have a number of historic districts that have rules on some of the things Mr. Johnston talked about on improvements, changes, things like that and we have chosen to this point to not create that type of structure in our code, rather than more just recognition of these historic properties, but not necessarily restricting their future uses.

Simison: Council, any additional questions or comments?

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: Thanks. Blaine, always appreciate your -- your updates and I had an opportunity to bump into Brandon a few weeks ago and he sure just praised the -- the Commission for your work and he's really enjoyed working on this project. My question is for -- maybe for you to give us some flavor for the Commission's perspective. You know, from time to time the Council will receive, you know, an e-mail or communication from a -- from a resident in opposition to a particular development application and their comments are typically that they believe that a building on that property is of a historical nature. Do you think that we should be sending those requests to your Commission or -- or how should the city respond when we receive those types of inquiries?

Johnston: Mr. Mayor, Members of City Council, Commissioner Cavener, it's hard to answer that question. Personally myself I would say, yes, I would like to see those. I try to look at all of the applications that come through Planning and Zoning and -- and look at them before Planning and Zoning and you guys have a chance to look at them. If I see a building on there that has some potential, then, we will probably reach out to the owner. At a minimum photograph it and document it. And I guess that's a discussion between HPC and City Council as to the second part of that. Do you want that as part of your process if you get comments from the public that's saying this building is listed, does it need to go before HPC. That's -- that's a requirement that you guys are going to have to put forth. I -- I can't answer that question for you. I hope that answers your question.

Simison: And maybe if I could add on to that just from some conversations that I have -- I have had with the chair is they are out there proactively identifying these items and, you know, there are some development applications coming through on rather large farm properties in certain parts where they are working with the current property owner trying to look at what can or should they be doing with some of the facilities on that property. So, it's a little bit of both. You know, I think, you know, proactive and same with the report that's being looked at to help identify where those may exist to -- to help them in that part. So, they are -- they are trying to -- to -- to be proactive is the best way I could say it, but whether or not they catch everything or everything is big enough, you know, that lateral that someone identifies, you know, the -- the wood that was used to place down for the lateral that came from the tree that was really important on the town square, that may not be caught in their processes if someone identified that in a hearing application as an example. Okay. All right. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

Johnston: Thank you.

22. Meridian Arts Commission Annual Update

Simison: So, next up we will have Jessica Peters with the Meridian Arts Commission annual update.

Peters: Mr. Mayor, Council Members, thank you for having me here today. I'm Jessica Peters. I'm the chair of the Meridian Arts Commission and I'm going to tell you about everything that the Meridian Arts Commission accomplished in 2022. We have got a lot to get through, so I will try to get through it quickly. So, our mission statement for the Meridian Arts Commission is to develop, advance and nurture all facets of the arts and to enhance the quality of life for Meridian residents and its visitors and this slide shows the Commissioners that we had last year and this year -- as you can see we have -- we have had some changes in our commissioners and our staff and we have three new commissioners that have been nominated and we are hoping to have those approved soon. Looking forward to working with them on our Commission. So, I'm going to start with our Meridian Art in Public Spaces program. This is a program that was authorized by city ordinance in 2015 and through the ordinance City Council allocates 50 cents per Meridian resident with a cap of 50,000 dollars per year for develop -- identifying and developing projects for public art on city property and last year that cap was removed. So, now our funding for our Meridian Art in Public Spaces program can continue to grow as our population grows. So, we really appreciate your support with that. We started a new public art identity -- park identity project in 2021 at the Five Mile Creek Pathway Trail hub sites and we continued working on that project last year and through a process for a request for qualifications and a request for proposals we selected Water Metrics, which is a mosaic sculpture created by Eileen Gay from Nevada and the call to artists that we used had more applicants than Meridian has previously seen. So, the word is getting out. We have a great place for public art here in Meridian and we are looking forward to installing that piece this summer and here is a little bit more of a close-up. And, again, these are mosaics, so if you picture lots of tiny tiles covering the surfaces of these. The inside is supposed to look like a waterfall and the outside features some images with tiles that are common images for Idaho. So, we have potato plants. We have some cattails and reeds. We have got the mountain Bluebird, which is our state bird and a red wing blackbird. So, if you have travelled on the Five Mile Creek Pathway at all you have probably seen some of these actual plants and animals living over there on the -- on the creek. And this is a mockup of what it will look like when it's ready. So, these are about ten feet tall, I believe, and you will be able to see them from -- from Ten Mile Road. They will not be hidden. So, next I'm going to talk about our Meridian mural series. You probably remember the first mural that was installed and painted by Ben Konkol at Meridian Cycles. We had a public unveiling for that in the fall of '21 and our second mural was installed at unBound Library during Meridian Art Week last year and we had that unveiling last fall and, then, our third mural is planned for Meridian pool. This is going to be painted by Sector 17. It's the same artist that did the -- the mural over on the Zamzow's property right next door here and I just saw on social media that they have just started preparing the wall for painting. So, that will be going up pretty soon and we are going to have that unveiling this spring. The next public art project is our murals at Tully skate park. This was an opportunity for a professional artist Miguel Almeida to partner with a youth apprentice Macy Ratzesberger, who is a student at the Idaho Fine Arts Academy, and they worked together to paint a couple of murals at the Tully skate park and here are the final results. Miguel's piece is on the left there and previously that space had been kind of a faded old mural with some graffiti. So, obviously, his work really spruces up the place and, then, Macy's work on the right was

a great opportunity for her to have more public exposure to her artwork and Miguel, you have probably seen some of his work in the Treasure Valley, he's become pretty popular and I think Macy is doing some more work as well. So, that was a great project. And our final public art project is our traffic box series. This is ongoing and we wrapped ten traffic boxes last year. You can see the list of all of the locations and the pieces that were wrapped and these usually have a -- a life of about five to seven years. So, we are getting to the point where some of the old wraps needed to -- they were kind of faded, they needed to be rewrapped, and so we had four of the -- the pieces last year to replace some old faded wraps that needed to be replaced and three of -- three of these wraps were sponsored by the Meridian Development Corporation, so we really appreciate their ongoing support of this program. We also had Concerts on Broadway. Another year -- great year for that. We brought in Smooth Avenue, High Street, and Soul Patch. As you can see from the -- the photographs lots of people came to hang out, enjoy the music and dance and we just had great attendance and -- and lots of feedback about how much people enjoyed it. We also presented Tammy De Weerd's awards in the arts. So, we presented four -- four winners. RendyB Funk, who was a former arts commissioner -- youth commissioner received the award for student excellence in the Arts. Cecycle Brock was recognized with the support of the arts award. Marianna Jimenez Edwards received the award for arts in education and Dwight Williams received the excellence in the arts award. We also had a great Meridian Art Week. Our growing in popularity art drop, everyone really loves that every year. We always have lots of people find cool art around the city. Very popular chalk art competition. Live music. Classes. Again, that mural that was painted at the library. The Plein Air Painters of Idaho were hanging around town and -- and folks could stop and watch -- watch their processes as they painted sort of the landscape around town. We had a community art party, which we worked with -- we partnered with the -- the city Parks and Rec Department and, then, our Concerts on Broadway. We also had 11 Initial Point gallery exhibits and we have 11 instead of 12, because our December exhibit rolls into January as well. So, we had 172 artists, multiple artist organizations and group exhibits. The West Ada School District show of youth art and the College of Western Idaho art faculty exhibit. And we have a new exhibit now. This is the Treasure Valley Artist Alliance. They show every year in the gallery and they always have a color theme. So, this year their color theme is yellow. Lots of great artworks incorporating that color into those pieces. Our opening reception is happening as we speak, so I encourage you all to go up there and check it out. Lots of great work happening there. If you want to follow along with what we are doing you can find us on social media. We are Meridian Arts Commission on Facebook and at Meridian Arts on Instagram. So, I will kind of skip this, because I think we have already gone through everything and wanted to wrap this up. So, I will just mention quickly our goals for 2023. We are going to continue doing all the great things that we have been doing with our -- our murals, our public arts, our gallery, engaging the community through Art Week and the Concerts on Broadway series. We are going to continue supporting our traffic box series. We have a new park identity project over at Discovery Park happening and we are also expanding our support for the performing arts with a call for performing artist projects. That's a new call to artists this year. We are also going to present the Tammy De Weerd's awards in the arts again and we are also focusing on increasing our inclusive

programming through representation of diverse populations and marketing to underserved and underrepresented populations. So, finally, I just want to thank City Council, Mayor Simison, and the city staff for everything that you all do for us. Without you all we wouldn't be able to fulfill our mission and, really, the arts help advance the quality of life for Meridian residents and its visitors and -- and we couldn't do all of that without you. So, thank you, again, for your support and I'm happy to take any questions.

Simison: Thank you, Jessica. Council, any questions?

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: Jessica, can you go back one slide onto your -- the priorities?

Peters: Uh-huh.

Borton: Number 12. Can you just comment briefly on the plan to accomplish that? Is it in -- in next year's report might we have a -- a list and a plan of --

Peters: Well, that's what we are hoping for. So, we are still working on the details for that I think. In order to develop a -- the full art plan that -- that we think the Commission -- the -- the public art program deserves, I think we would need more funding for that. But we are currently -- we keep kind of a list -- ongoing list of the project ideas that we have in mind and in our public arts subcommittee we review those priorities and identify when we have opportunities to begin a new project, which ones the -- you know, what is our priority for that, so --

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: So -- I mean is the plan really to cultivate that in-house amongst the existing commissioners, as opposed to seeking outside help? Is that outside help to come up with a plan or opportunities that maybe the -- the commissioners don't recognize or -- just trying to get a sense of what the process would be.

Peters: Right. Well -- so, the -- Commissioner -- Mr. Mayor, City Council, our ideal situation would be to have that outside help. That is currently outside of our budget. So, considering that we are identifying ways that we can achieve that in-house, but it -- it's not our preferred approach.

Borton: Okay.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you very much for the presentation. I had the opportunity to attend several of the events that you mentioned. I'm curious about -- you said you are looking for the opportunity for additional performing arts presentations. Have you discussed partnering with like the Chamber or the City Parks Department on events they already have going on and which individuals can come and -- and display what they are doing? Like the Octoberfest, for example, is a great large event and just kind of doing that, so, then, that maybe help some of the cost in addition to gives the public exposure to some of the local artists.

Peters: Yeah. Mr. Mayor, City Council, thank you for that -- that question. It's not something that we have discussed in depth, so when I referenced support for the performing arts -- in the past we have just provided funding to the Treasure Valley Children's Theatre solely and this year we opened that up to other performing arts organizations in the area and so we used the call to artists so organizations could apply for funding. So -- and instead of supporting just one organization, we are hoping to support more. But that's a great idea to look at other opportunities for things that are already happening in the city and identify ways to partner.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: And one of the things I enjoy, Concerts on Broadway, which is coming back and I noticed -- you know, they used to have them I think once in -- one in June, one in July, one in August and, then, you guys moved to I think take advantage of a little cooler evenings. So, is that working out? Are you still having good attendance for that?

Peters: Mr. Mayor, City Council, yes. I -- as you can see I think last year was maybe our best attended yet. Seems like word is getting out that -- that that's a great opportunity for the community to come together and enjoy some live music. So, I do think that having the -- the later performances does help. The sun is a little bit lower. It's, like you said, not quite so hot out.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: Excellent presentation. I'm -- I'm pretty excited to see the final artwork on the pathway on Five Mile Creek that's going to connect all the way from Ten Mile to Locust Grove. I mean that's a -- that's a long -- that's been a long time coming and it's going to be great that we have that and hopefully we will get it from Ten Mile all the way to Black Cat. So, thank you for -- you and everyone else for all the hard work you put in.

Peters: Yeah. Thank you.

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: I love the Commission and arts in our community. So, I -- I just also want to say thank you and -- and my question on number 12 is -- is just encouraging you to think broadly and a successful arts program in our community is one driven not by what the seven of us might want necessarily, right, but -- but encouraging you to support artistic endeavors in ways that we don't even -- I might not like or someone else might not like up here, but there is members in our community that are served by it and appreciate it, whether it's performing arts or visual arts. That's next level stuff for our community. So, as easy as it might be to fall within a more narrow field of -- of delivering the arts, continue to stretch and challenge us and encourage us to support arts in ways we haven't before. It's perhaps going uphill at times to do so, but I think that's really our obligation to the arts community is to -- to try to just make sure we can encourage and promote in broader ways. That's going to help your Commission be successful. So, thanks for pushing us and continue to do so as you go forward, so --

Peters: Mr. Mayor, City Council, thank you very much for that -- that comment. I do want to point out a couple of things. First of all, the -- the Tully Park project, the -- the skate park that was kind of a newer idea that we came up with sort of mid year, I have to credit Cassandra for that, that was great. So, it's -- it think it helps to have a member of the arts community leading us. She can come up with those ideas and -- and we can all share ideas. The other idea -- as part of -- of a larger public arts plan that we are hoping for is to conduct a survey from the community about what interests, you know, members of the community might have, what ideas they might have. We did conduct a survey in 2020. Those responses may have been limited, because it was sort of the start of the pandemic and folks had other things on their minds and so that was something that we -- we were hoping to enlist outside help with to develop and conduct that survey to gather ideas from the greater community and -- and find out what we could be doing, what folks want to see, and how we can best represent the community within our art.

Borton: Good. That's great.

Simison: Excellent. Well, thank you, Jessica. And, Council, you will have an opportunity to expand the Arts Commission by 50 percent, at least with their current members, to get them back up to full speed next week on our agenda I think is when those recommendations will be coming forward. So, look forward to giving you a full team.

Peters: Thank you so much.

Simison: Thank you. And thank you, Cassandra, for all you do to assist them in these endeavors. Okay. Appreciate it.

Borton: Good job.

23. Compensation Committee Update

Simison: So, with that we will move on to Item 3, which is our compensation committee update, which will be led by Mr. Lavoie and in the audience we have several members of -- of the compensation committee team that are here as well, both over here on our left and here on our right and up here. So, Todd, take it away.

Lavoie: Appreciate that, Mayor, Members of the Council. Again, appreciate the time to present to you the work we have been -- that we have been working on. As Robert stated, the community members are here and also online is Mike from the consulting company, the -- Gallagher. They are -- they specialize in compensation. So, Mike is online available to us -- or to you as well. As soon as I get this to work. There we go. Sorry about that. So, what we have for you today is an update that we promised you. I presented this budget -- or not budget. I apologize here. I am talking about budget. I presented this compensation plan to you on March 22nd via an e-mail. The plan has not changed since that date. So, the -- the presentation and the talking points in that e-mail are still true. I'm going to go over those exact same talking points that I presented to you on March 22nd's e-mail. So, again, this project has been a collaboration between the members that are here today, plus Mike from the compensation company Gallagher. We have been working with them for the past two years. You approved a contract for us two years ago to embark on this endeavor to overhaul the city's compensation program. Last year we presented to you -- and with the guidance of Gallagher and Mike -- Mike from Gallagher on phase one. Phase one was to establish the city's I guess market approach of a minimum of 50 percent salary -- would adjust our salaries to at least 50 percent of the market rate of the 14 agencies that we gathered from the northwest region. So, that was phase one. We presented that to you, spoke to you and if -- and we implemented that as of October 1. So, right now the city has all employees -- general employees -- let me rephrase that. This study is for the general employees, not for the police step plan or the fire union negotiations. This is for the general employees. Effective October 1 we moved all salaries up to at least 50 percent of the market rate as we presented to you last year. During that presentation we promised to you and our commitment to the employees that we would continue to establish the compensation program and that's what we have for you today. So, following the guidance of Mike from Gallagher, our compensation consultant, what we have presented to you is what we are going to look for your acceptance for on a purpose, the overview and the goals of this compensation plan program. So, again, first thing we will discuss with you today is the purpose of the compensation program. You know, following Mike from Gallagher's guidance, these principles are best practices within the compensation arena. So, we did rely on Mike to give us these guiding principles and these principles are going to discuss -- what I'm going to discuss with you is -- you know, the first one is going to be competitive. You know, we wanted to have a principal statement for our compensation plan that would make sure that the city's compensation plan over the next ten years can stay and maintain a competitive position within the northwest region. Another purpose statement that we wanted to make sure that the conversation plan had was long term and what we mean by that is a commitment to our employees. We want to make sure that we commit to our

employees of a compensation plan that's going to be fundable and market driven. Again, that kind of talked about the next bullet point, which is fundable. We wanted to make sure that whatever program we developed with the guidance of Mike and Gallagher is that it was going to be fundable. We need to make sure that we can fund this for at least the next ten years. We wanted a program that could be transparent or that is transparent. We want the employees, we want Council, we want managers, we want everybody to be able to understand what this compensation plan looks like and will do for them for the next ten years. And the last principle that we would like to present to you is going to be the ease of use. Again, we need this program to be understandable by the employees, but also by HR, so that they can manage and administer a program that is easy to understand by all involved. So, those are the five purpose principle statements that we worked with Gallagher to propose to you for our overarching compensation plan. Again now I'm going to talk about some of the details of the plan itself and these were presented to you in the March 22nd e-mail. So, the first item that we wanted to update you on or change was the step plan. This plan is going to adopt a step plan that is very similar to what public safety has used for years. It is a deviation from our current kinds of levels approach in theory. Again, it wasn't a step plan, but you had a beginning and an end. This is just a more defined step plan. This step plan does have 15 steps in it. The step plan does offer a 25 percent growth opportunity. If you start with the city and you stick with the city doing that particular job for 15 years we will commit to that employee a 25 percent growth opportunity. Step increases between -- steps vary from .2 percent to 1.83 percent. Those are the step variations between steps between -- of the 15 years. Let's see. So, that would be the -- so, that's a change for us on the step plan. Again, we want this to be market based. We would like for Gallagher, our consulting company, to continue to make sure that we maintain a market competitive compensation plan. So, at least every two to three years we will work with them to go out and gather data and make sure we are still market competitive. Previous years were -- previous plans we did not do it as often and we got a little bit behind. We want this plan to make sure we stay on top of it, so we do not get behind it and we want to maintain that market competitiveness. The next item is COLA. Cost of living adjustment. We would like the compensation plan that we are presenting to you to adopt an annual COLA adjustment. The previous plans we did not do that, like -- or if you looked at the last 20 years we only adjusted the compensation plan nine times for inflationary considerations and that's why we got so far behind. 2022 we adjusted it 13 to 15 percent, because we had to play catch up. We would like to have a plan that puts COLA into effect on an annual basis for discussion, so that we don't get that far behind. So, we want to make sure we keep our employees paychecks whole and, then, if we do the COLA with the market study every two to three years -- Jessica, you asked this question in the e-mail -- this will solve the problem of getting too far behind, because we are incrementally adjusting the market rate, our market, and, then, every three -- two to three years we ask Gallagher how does our data look compared to the market? Are we in good shape? Awesome. If not what adjustments do we need to make? So, we think with these two additional tools in the toolbox we shouldn't get to the point where we are making a presentation to you -- I need to adjust it 15 percent. Hopefully, we don't do that again. So, that's what COLA represents. We want that to be a factor, so that we can have a market competitive compensation plan. Longevity is another component

that we would like to add to our compensation plan. Right now this compensation plan is based on 15 steps as I presented. So, the question is what happens to those employees that meet the ceiling of a 15 step program. Those employees will still continue to get annual COLA adjustments. So, it's not like their salaries ever freeze. They -- if -- if you offer two percent COLA adjustment, they get two percent. So, their salaries don't freeze. They will continue to grow with inflation in the market. We would like to add an additional component to that called a longevity bonus. In this case we are presenting a one thousand dollar longevity bonus to all employees treated equally, saying thank you for sticking with us and here is a longevity bonus of a thousand dollars if they happen to be in that seat for 15 years and, then, the last item is the penetration. This is going to solve our compression issue. So, instead of hiring everybody at step zero -- so, use an example, you know, Bill and I would be both lawyers at step zero, he has got 20 years experience, I have one, that wouldn't be fair to him. So, Bill should be at the cap and I should be at the entry point. So, I would be step zero and he will be step 15. So, we would recognize Bill's longevity and go, Bill, you are going to be compensated at step 15. Todd, you are a one year lawyer, you are going to be step zero and that is how we are going to solve the compensation issue or the -- the compression issue for tenure in the current job that you are doing for the City of Meridian. So, that's the overall -- the overview of the major components of the compensation plan changes from what we had, you know, I guess two -- two, three years ago. So, again, anytime please ask me any questions. Again, this is the general overview. See if I have missed any talking points. We got -- Jessica's -- we got -- answered yours about COLA. So, I -- so, those are the overarching ones. I know we have some more questions, Jessica, that you asked today. I have those in the presentation that I will address for you. But, please, anytime engage, ask us, we have everybody here. So, again, that was the overview. The question is what goals are we trying to achieve? We are trying to increase our tenure. Right now our average tenure is seven years. Our goal with this program is to go to ten. That's our goal. You know, obviously, we have a lot longer term goals, but this is our goal right now. In ten years maybe it's -- let's make it 12. But right now our goal is ten years and we believe by adjusting -- or creating the step plan and acknowledging time in seat, the penetration approach, and having a modified bell curve in 15 years of step for 25, we believe we can have that goal -- or attain that goal of going from seven to ten years. That's -- again, that's our goal for this. Next item is the commitment to employees. This program shows the employees, as clear as possible, what we are going to commit to them if they commit to us. If I'm going to be your CFO for the next 15 years, I can see exactly what my -- your commitment to me is from a compensation standpoint clear as day. Talent attraction. Our current -- or previous program we entered the market at 20 percent of the market rate. We are starting at 50 percent. So, that's 30 percent increase -- again, this will address one of Jessica's questions -- by increasing our -- our floor 30 percent, we believe we are now more attractive to the candidates out there. We are not hiring at 20, we are hiring at 50. That's intuitive to us that should automatically bring people to us, because we are hiring at a 50 percent market rate. We are also going to now allow people to grow to 75 percent higher -- or 25 percent growth rate with us. So, we believe that commitment will continue to retain the talent with the City of Meridian and, then, increasing tenure, which I -- or to maintain market competitiveness, reviewing this every

two to three years, making sure our compensation consultant Gallagher is working with us every single year on this, making sure we are presenting a strong solid plan to our employees and reviewing it every two to three years. So, those were the goals of this -- these changes. So, again, in general -- so, in review, our final recommendation to you, looking for acceptance, so that we can work with Gallagher, so we can work with the HR Department, so we can work with the Legal Department to start building those guidelines, those -- the rules, the regulations to a program. We would like to see the principles accepted that we create a 25 percent growth opportunity for our employees. If they commit to us, we are committing to them with a 25 percent growth opportunity over 15 years. Have a step plan that's defined, easy to understand of 15 steps. Working with Gallagher we are going to make sure that we have our penetration -- or I guess our job and placement prevent the compression issues by getting people in the right place based on their experience, doing the job that they are doing at the City of Meridian. Adapt or adopt a longevity bonus program for those that are in the same job for 15 years and, then, make sure we are staying on top of our market data. Every two to three years asking the consultant company to update it and, then, adopt a COLA adjustment, cost of living, based on the consumer price index, you know, the average -- just for your information 20 years of -- on average for the last 20 years on average is United States of America experiences a 2.44 inflation rate in adjustment every single year on average. Obviously, the last three -- two years have been much different, but, again, we have also had two years of negative inflation over the last 20 years. So, again, we are just looking that we want to stay on top of inflation, as opposed to what we did last time and that's what got us in trouble. So, again, those are the guiding principles of following, you know, Gallagher's experience, best practices. What we have in front of you is a best practice approach supported and presented to us by Gallagher in collaboration with the committee members and we are all here to answer any questions that you may have and we are looking for acceptance of these principles, so we can start working with Gallagher to build the guidelines, so we can make this effective October 1 of 2023. This is the commitment we made to the employees. We are following up on our commitment to the employees with this presentation. Stand -- we all sit-stand for any questions. Thank you.

Simison: Thank you, Todd. I appreciate it very much. I will just add on a few comments and, you know, see if any of the other committee members want to come up and add on anything and -- and, you know, from my perspective this is once every three years to go through and evaluate it. It puts it -- it helps us balance certain things where we have the Police step plan and we have the Fire Department contract negotiations. So, this would be just put into that every third year. Helps I think from a long-term financial budgeting process by doing that as well in that -- that regards. You know, fundable. That -- that was something that was important to me. I know that there has been compensation committees that have had discussions before this one. Those have been robust discussions that I was not part of, but I -- I want to make sure that we were able to actually bring something back that was going to -- something we could come forward and say we can do this and we can fund it. Because that -- that -- that's an important part. Is it perfect? Well, we will answer that right now. No. Is our current compensation program perfect? I think that you can look out and see other people

shaking their head. The answer is no. It -- it's created its own set of unique challenges and I think that that's going to be true with any plan. Any plan that you have in place for a long time is going to create challenges and get certain inequities in -- in place for a wide variety of reasons. Some of them are systematic, some of them are supervisor decisions in different departments and how things are applied and so you have people saying, well, someone in this department makes more money than me in this department. Well, that could be a result of how a supervisor chooses to apply their ratings under a -- our current system, you know, which is based upon performance, but not everyone views performance the same way and I know that's been some of the conversations with -- you know, that I have been having is, you know -- you know, does -- but it is a dramatic change in some regards, but it is alignment with how we apply towards our other employees as well. So, I just want to at least share that from -- from my viewpoint as well, but I'm personally very excited about this. There may be some different viewpoints or tweaks that you could -- we -- we could make in that case to me so long as it's fundable and it's -- it meets those other philosophies, that's great. If we didn't want 15 years move on to 12 years. If you didn't want to do 25 percent, you want to do 20, you are wanting to do 30 percent -- again, as long as we can fund it, you know, those -- those are things. But, really, it's -- there is the concept that we presented seemed to pass your muster for where we want to go and I can say, you know, from -- as we were preparing to get the budget -- this year's budget has this -- these elements worked into it and if we aren't going to go this direction, then, we -- we just need to know quickly, so we can come up with another approach to address the -- especially the compression issue, which we say we were going to come back and address and, you know, maybe we do that outside of adopted changes in the plan, but that's still going to be -- we are going to have to come up with something at that point in time to address that issue and we just want to make sure that we are moving this process forward and meeting the goals of Council in the past who didn't want to have placeholder numbers, they wanted to have real numbers for real execution and at least with this setup we can deliver that in this year's budget for the Council. Any other members of the committee have anything else that they would like to add at this time? Okay. Perfect. So, Council, with that I will turn it over to you.

Overton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Overton.

Overton: First off, Todd and -- and committee members, awesome job. I'm saying that as the newest member sitting in this seat, but someone who spent decades sitting in your seat and just a little known fact. A lot of people don't think about this, but in the Police Department we had two pay scales. Sometimes we forget that police officers had a step plan. We had 20, 30 plus civilian employees who were on the same step plan or the same pay scale as the rest of the city and when it started to fall behind we ended up with some pretty disgruntled employees watching one step plan working very effectively year after year and another one that would fall behind and fall behind. On January 3rd, not knowing this was something that was being worked on, I said in that night when I was appointed that I wanted to see that we could hire the best, but retain

the best, and I'm super excited to see this plan. It mirrors a lot of what the police step plan has today. It has a lot of the same things built into it that you should be able to offer a very competitive wage to bring your employees in and also have the ability to continue to pay them and retain them. Nothing is more frustrating than all the years before we had a good pay scale in the police department watching really good talent walk out the door and I know there is other parts of the city that are seeing this now. So, I would echo what the Mayor said about funding it. That's very important. And if we can fund this I think you are on the right track and I think we come up with a -- a great program to carry forward for the rest of the city.

Lavoie: Thank you, John. And just a reminder, you do have Mike from our consulting company. He is online if you have specific questions for him.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: I might be a few steps behind Councilman Overton. Back to some -- maybe more simplistic questions on my part. Just trying to wrap my head around all of the implications for the staff and for our budget. So, I want to understand how the 15 years came into play. Was that a recommendation from the consultant based on information from other organizations where that has worked successfully? Was that just -- it sounds like a great place to start based on where we -- where we want our tenure to be as -- as the Mayor just mentioned, you know, we don't have to do it at 15, we could do it at ten or 12. So, just kind of want to understand the thinking behind why 15 was chosen and how that benefits the city in the long run.

Lavoie: Fair question. Again, Mike, I think you are online, but there was a compromise between -- it wasn't a compromise. It was a discussion based on best practices and I will go ahead -- Mike, can you address that for Council Woman Perreault?

Mike: Yeah. I appreciate the question, Council Woman. Can you hear me all right?

Lavoie: Yeah.

Mike: Good. Yeah. Thanks very much for allowing me to be here. The -- yeah. The-- it kind of comes from best practices and making sure that we have a range spread that's going to allow folks to progress through the range. You don't want the range spread to be too narrow where people top out too fast as well. So, that is a concern, thinking about the average number of steps that go into. It -- it's going to -- it's going to vary across the country in different regions from -- from our perspective. Some range pressure can be very narrow when we go a little bit further out west, out in California, because they have three, four, five steps to the maximum and those are done every year. I think that maxes out a little bit too fast and also depends on where you are placing that market competitive target. The city did move to that 50th percentile, say let's start there, let's move at that level and we are simply developing a range kind of

around that a little bit -- start a little bit below, move to that level, and, then, also move above. So, the range spread encompasses that full marketing is the example Todd brought about like making sure that you have the room to account for some of those differences in the experience that some folks might be bringing in, folks that are there, so you have that room to alleviate pay compression for -- based on the ten year performance longevity of -- of individuals as well.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: Thank you very much, Mike. I appreciate that explanation. Just two more other quick questions. The compression issue, if I'm understanding that correctly, in phase two, like I had asked about, that's basically bringing -- bring -- everybody's is 50 percent. So, that's bringing staff that have -- that have been here longer up to the place that they currently are. So, if they -- if their current wage is really yet like what step six would be, because of the length of time that they have been here, then, that's bringing them up from 50 percent to wherever they would be at -- is -- is that what that --

Lavoie: Got it. Perfect.

Perreault: Okay. So, that's -- that's understanding, then, why that's -- that dollar figure estimated for phase two is about three times more than --

Lavoie: Got it.

Perreault: -- year -- year two.

Lavoie: You got it.

Perreault: Okay. All right.

Lavoie: Nailed it.

Perreault: Good. Great. Connected the dots on that one. So, then, there are some members of our staff that will be at step 15 as of today.

Lavoie: Less than one percent of your current staff will be there, yes.

Perreault: Okay. Have you already, then, gone through and figured out how many will be in the first four years of -- or first five years, second five years, third five years? You have those ratios? Can you send those to me?

Lavoie: Sure.

Perreault: Okay. Great. Thank you. And, then, as far as the consultation agreement with Gallagher, how is that going to be structured? Is that -- is there going to be like an annual fee that we are going to pay them? Do we have to put that out for some sort of bid every so often? How will that work?

Lavoie: Yes and yes. It's up to us. It is a professional services agreement, so we can hire -- can hire them directly or if the direction is to go out for bid we can do either one. Our commitment is to Gallagher at the moment. They have -- we have been working with them for two years, so we would like to commit with them and see this plan go out for a few years before we try to change a different vendor. But we can go either direction. So, we will have an ongoing contract with them, which we currently do. They already support HR department with acts. If we commit to this we will have an amendment to their contracts as every two to three years -- three years we need this and that will be an amendment to the contract in the budget presentation to you saying this is -- it's time. Just like the city survey. It's time for this. Would you give us the funding, so that HR can move forward with this.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor, just to follow up on that.

Simison: Council Woman Perreault.

Perreault: So, I might not have been clear on my question, so --

Lavoie: I apologize.

Perreault: -- currently -- no, it's -- it's probably my -- my asking. Currently we have inconsistently done the compensation updates and I think it was supposed to be every five years. That was kind of what HR expected. So, what I'm asking is are we now going to have like an annual amount that we set aside in the budget to pay for professional services for this?

Lavoie: No. So, this would be, again, our commitment is to upgrade -- update the market study every three years. So, every three years HR, myself, and Robert will stand in front of the Council and go we need X amount of dollars to complete X. Are you good with that? No -- no different than our annual city survey or something. We will stand in front of you every three years.

Simison: And we currently do have a -- we have always had an ongoing professional --

Lavoie: We do.

Simison: -- contract for these services. It's been with other companies in the past and it switched to Gallagher recently.

Lavoie: Yep. Appreciate the questions.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: Just a comment. Number one, you had mentioned it, that there is no perfect plan and that -- that's true. There is always a rub somewhere with something and it's one of those things. It's just the way it is. There is no perfect plan. But a couple things that I like about this -- and I appreciate the group who worked on this. You guys are on the front lines of dealing with this issue and -- and I think, number one, it allows us to be competitive and on those two fronts. One, to hire people, but also to retain people and that's critical, especially in this market right now, it's -- it's difficult and I think that solves -- goes a long ways to solving a -- a serious problem that we have and that's be competitive. So, hopefully, that will -- will help. And, then, it's -- it's a -- it's a future issue that I think it helps resolve and that is being fiscally responsible for the future, not having that 13 to 15 percent increase that we had to swallow here recently and -- you know. And we may not be on Council when they are dealing with this ten years from now and it's -- hopefully it works. Yes, there may be tweaks along the way, as you mentioned, Todd, but it's -- it's set up to allow for that and to hopefully keep us on track fiscally and -- and not have some big issue that hits and you have to make some very serious and difficult budget decisions. So, I -- I think it -- it overall is a really good plan and something I think -- appreciate your hard work that everyone invested into this.

Lavoie: I appreciate it. And I would agree that, you know, we are going to commit, you know, this plan to our employees and, you know, the -- the committee members, even, you know, the previous HR to Crystal Ritchie, with Christina Barragan, we have all committed to being on this comp plan every single year. We are going to talk about it. You know, we all -- we are going to make this not disappear, not lose sight of it, and that's -- we dropped the ball a few times and we are going to make sure we commit to it. Yep.

Cavener: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Cavener.

Cavener: A couple just quick thoughts and I think first I think thanks to you, Mr. Mayor, because this was employee led and I think that is something that is -- is really really critical and I know in our conversation sometimes there were things that maybe you or I didn't necessarily always agree on, but we really appreciate and value that it was our employees leading this effort on behalf of other employees. So, putting on my former city employee hat, I -- I really appreciate that. There is a couple of things that I -- I really do like about this and a couple of things that do give me a little bit of pause. The most important thing is that I think for our employees is that this is predictable. You know what your compensation is going to look like as you work for the city. It allows you to focus on -- continue to do great work on behalf of our taxpayers and -- and not always having to worry about does that extra effort mean more or less in your paycheck. That does bring the other side of the coin. You know, I'm always going to be concerned

about how we are recognizing our top performing employees. The other piece that does give me a little bit of pause on as well -- to your point, Todd, it's -- it's like less than one percent of our current employees that would be maxed out for longevity. There is something to be really said for historical knowledge and we have seen that on this Council, we have seen that in this city and my hope will be is that between now and three years from now is that the committee takes another look at longevity and making sure, you know, is a thousand dollars really the appropriate way to honor and recognize our long-term employees? I think we could do better than that. I would like us to do better than that. I also think that that serves as a -- as a strong incentive for our employees to stick with us and not just look at, you know, their service to the city in a 15 year window. So, overall I'm very very pleased, but I look forward to the continuing work of you and the other committee members to continue to refine and to feel comfortable, at least from my perspective, to bring back recommendations, even if it's before three years from now. Particularly one of the pieces that I -- I tend to worry about is does this new plan -- you know, if I'm an employee and kind of your point, Todd, I know what I'm going to make ten years from now, does that, then, become a floor or a basement for me to go out and seek employment in other places and so I -- I always worry that we are going to lose our top performing staff. While we want to always recruit great people, we also want to be able to retain them and we will continue to look to you for recommendations to be able to do that.

Lavoie: Appreciate the -- the support on that, Luke. And, again, I think the committee members -- Mike and -- you know, we -- we all agree that we can always continue to adapt and adjust this compensation plan for the City of Meridian every single year. If the thousand dollars isn't right, let's talk about it. Let's find something that works for the city. What is the environment in four years? Adjust. Adapt. Again, I think this committee and the commitment to their employees we have to do that and I think we can do that and I believe the high performing people will always continue to be promoted. I think that's an automatic succession plan that, again, the HR department will support and promote to us to continue to foster and promote those high performing people every single day. But I agree with you, Luke, that this will not disappear. We will continue to talk about it every year and we have to be able to adapt and adjust every single year. I appreciate it.

Borton: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Borton.

Borton: Todd, does our existing policy speak to the elements that you had in your overview and goals slide?

Lavoie: Does the current policy?

Borton: Right.

Lavoie: Not exactly, no. So, COLA was not -- like using COLA, 15 year step plan, no and no.

Borton: So, what I think would be helpful for us and to avoid pivots in future years, it's a pretty big -- the policy statements and the overview I agree with. I understand how you got there and it -- it seems like it would be appropriate to memorialize those in a narrative policy for the Council to formally adopt that they -- they seem to describe some -- some principles of compensation that can consistently apply, even if specific elements adjust from year to year, but the broad principles should guide and drive how it's administered over the next ten, 20 years. Is that something that --

Lavoie: Oh, completely agree.

Borton: -- maybe that's part of the plan already.

Lavoie: Yeah. Exactly. So, we had -- you signed -- or you approved a contract for the city to engage with the compensation -- Gallagher and in that contract it says they are going to build a plan for us with all administration guidelines and administrative rules. We didn't want to have them build all that and, then, present it to you and go, well, I don't like it. Well, then, I would need a budget amendment, because it's only for -- good for one plan, where we had ask them to build five plans. So, we are looking for the principle, so that we can go, hey, Mike, legal, HR, we got the principles, let's build the guidelines, let's build the rules, let's build the policy, so we can present to you for effective date October 1, 2023.

Borton: Good.

Lavoie: So, we agree with you, we have to have all this written out. We just don't want Mike to go through all the work and go, oh, we don't like the plan.

Borton: Sure.

Lavoie: Yeah.

Simison: And, Councilman Borton, in that context I think that maybe the thing that would be helpful for us is we could -- we could very quickly come back with a policy statement and -- and get Council's buy in on the policy statement, which, then, would, essentially, enable us to apply the principles in the budget that we have established, understanding that it may not be until September or October before we actually have the underlying that we would come back and share with Council at that point in time. But from a moving forward standpoint process would that seem to -- to work and, you know, I -- I don't -- I don't know that it would take that long. Bill, you know, two weeks again we could probably come back with something.

Borton: I just -- Mr. Mayor, I thought that -- I thought what you had in the overview described really broad brush the fundamental principles of this new plan, which made

sense. I didn't hear any question from any of us up here about it. So, that certainly would be some action we would take. So, it's definitely different. There are trade-offs. Nothing's ever going to be perfect, I agree as well, but we recognize, one, listen to the employees and what fits best for them is a critical piece of it. So, good work to the whole committee to kind of get us there and using Mike's resources as well. Good job.

Lavoie: Appreciate it. Yeah. Again, big kudos to Mike and the consulting company that we hired. Again, they are the guiding principle behind this. We hired a professional compensation consulting company. They guided us. They seek feedback from us all the time. We had numerous meetings back and forth and this is the result of Mike's guidance and the collaboration of us and the -- of the employees. So, I appreciate it.

Borton: Did I hear you say you -- did you drop the ball? Someone -- I heard the phrase drop the ball.

Lavoie: I -- it wasn't me who dropped it, no.

Borton: Can you read that back? That was a phrase I heard.

Lavoie: I think it was Scott Colaianni who dropped the ball.

Colaianni: I dropped the ball.

Lavoie: Scott did.

Borton: Okay. That's just the only part that I picked up.

Simison: So, Council, here is what I would suggest -- recommend, is we -- we can work on policy statement and bring back to Council in, hopefully, two weeks. You know, we will just -- we will shoot for that time frame from that standpoint. In the meantime, if there are additional questions, comments, continue to reach out and engage with Todd, et cetera, and we will take -- you know, if Council adopts the policy statement that will be our -- our sign that that's in the budget, that's moving forward at that -- in that time frame and if there is -- if it's not adopted at that point in time, then, we will understand better from that standpoint. But if there are still challenges or concerns before we get to that, then, please engage and have that direct conversation in the next -- hopefully week.

Hoaglund: Mr. Mayor?

Simison: Councilman Hoaglund.

Hoaglund: I think that's a good direction to go. Again appreciate the work of the committee and I would move that we adjourn the work session.

Simison: Okay. Council Woman Perreault, did you have any -- I think she was waiting. I just wanted to -- don't preclude.

Perreault: Mr. Mayor, I do have additional questions, but, like you said, they are questions I can get answered meeting with Finance that get into the nuts and bolts at that time.

Simison: Perfect.

Perreault: Thanks.

Simison: All right. With that we 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 5:47 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)

MAYOR ROBERT SIMISON

_____/_____/_____
DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:

CHRIS JOHNSON - CITY CLERK