

A joint meeting of the Meridian City Council and the MDC Board was called to order at 5:33 p.m., Tuesday, July 12, 2016, by Mayor Tammy de Weerd.

Members Present: Mayor Tammy de Weerd, Keith Bird, Joe Borton, Genesis Milam, Ty Palmer, Anne Little Roberts and Luke Cavener.

Others Present: Bill Nary, Jaycee Holman, Bruce Chatterton, Caleb Hood, and Dean Willis.

Item 1: Roll-call Attendance:

Roll call.

<u> X </u> Anne Little Roberts	<u> X </u> Joe Borton
<u> X </u> Ty Palmer	<u> X </u> Keith Bird
<u> X </u> Genesis Milam	<u> X </u> Lucas Cavener
<u> X </u> Mayor Tammy de Weerd	

<u> </u> Jim Escobar – Chairman	<u> </u> Keith Bird – Member
<u> </u> Dan Basalone – Vice-Chairman	<u> </u> Nathan Mueller – Member
<u> </u> Dave Winder– Secretary/Treasurer	<u> </u> Callie Zamzow – Member
<u> </u> Tammy de Weerd – Member	
<u> </u> Eric Jensen – Member	
<u> </u> Calvin Barrett – Member	
<u> </u> Todd Lakey – Counsel	
<u> </u> Ashley Squyres – Administrator	

De Weerd: Okay. I am going to go ahead -- hello. I am going to go ahead and start tonight's meeting. Thank you for -- for all being here. This is a special joint meeting for City Council and the Meridian Development Corporation. For the record it is Tuesday, July 12th. It's 5:33. I will start with roll call attendance, Madam Clerk.

Item 2: Adoption of the Agenda

De Weerd: Thank you so much. Item No. 2 is adoption of the agenda.

Bird: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Bird.

Bird: I move we approve the agenda as published.

Borton: Second.

De Weerd: I have a motion and a second to adopt the agenda as published. All those in favor say aye. All ayes.

MOTION CARRIED: FIVE AYES. ONE ABSENT.

Item 3: Discussion of the Ten Mile Urban Renewal District

De Weerd: Item three is discussion of the Ten Mile Urban Renewal District. This was an item requested during our City Council meeting to meet jointly with the MDC Board to have a discussion about the ideas from MDC in moving forward and as Mr. Kushlan -- I couldn't remember it that night and this night as well. Mr. Kushlan had put out for discussion five different areas of how you could address this new district and the -- the various demands that it would have that's unique to the Downtown Urban Renewal District. So, Council wanted to meet with the MDC Board and have a conversation. I know that Bruce is giving you a slide of what was pulled from Phil's information and -- I don't know, Bruce, if you wanted to say anything.

Chatterton: Madam Mayor, Board Members, Council Member, I don't have a presentation. This is simply pulled from the report that was part of Phil Kushlan's scope of services under the work that he did to create the Urban Renewal District. I think as I mentioned to MDC board members a few weeks ago, the city didn't want us to seem like we were simply saying, hey, here is this new district, go administer it, we wanted to have an awareness of what the various options are under the statute for administering urban renewal districts. These five are a start. They -- you could probably mix and match them a little bit, but these are the five basic ways in which they can be administered and I believe each of these are in use somewhere in the state of Idaho currently for urban renewal districts. So, no presentation, just cuing up that information.

De Weerd: Thank you, Bruce. I'm going to open it up for discussion from the Council. Was there any questions or dialogue that was desired with the MDC board?

Little Roberts: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mrs. Little Roberts.

Little Roberts: I have had conversation with -- is that better? Sorry. Because we were using the number 50,000 and I was just curious -- maybe Bruce can answer that -- is there a formula or something that comes which arises to that number?

Chatterton: Madam Mayor and Council Member Little Roberts, there is no magic behind that number. It's a starting assumption for the financials. As MDC gets into the actual administration they might find that it's a little more or a little less, so Phil really just used it as a place holder number. Based upon, really -- really, his sense of what it would take to administer that -- that district based upon other -- other places he is

working with that have similar size districts, which are for economic development purposes, as opposed to say like a downtown district.

De Weerd: Okay. Thank you. A pregnant silence. Other discussion? I -- I know that it was slated for the MDC board to discuss, but we had trouble with a quorum and the quorum left during our -- our budget hearings, so the board hasn't had a chance to talk about this in full. I think the board -- the MDC board wanted to have this opportunity to interact with City Council to better understand what some of the Council's questions were before they had a more lengthy discussion and so that is the context. We haven't discussed it as a board. Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: Madam Mayor? To your point, that's -- for me, what I'm hoping to gain is maybe some insight from the MDC. I mean I don't want to assume that you guys haven't talked about this in one facet or another over the past few weeks and months, but has there been some discussion about what the preference is of the MDC as far as the management of the new URD?

Escobar: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Escobar.

Escobar: Councilman Cavener, we have discussed it as an executive board. We have not had a chance to discuss it with the entire board. We will be doing so -- I believe that's on our agenda tomorrow morning. We also know this is kind of a unique situation and that the city has engaged this report, has identified the district, and now it's going to be under our obligation to manage that district. So, I think part of my goal is to hear comments, questions, and thoughts that the City Council has, the Mayor has, so that we can address those in an open dialogue and come together with what a conclusion might be. In saying that I will state that the executive committee in our discussions believe that a good fit for a solution for this management, at least to start with would be to add these duties into the current administrator's roll we see this almost as an administrative oversight, at least in the near term, but, like I said, that -- that door is open. We want to hear what -- what the Council has to say about that, but we do think that Administrator Squyres has done a very good job managing a lot of projects over the past six years and we see this as maybe even an additional -- please help me with the terminology. I always forget this term. The agreement that we share in the property, what's the name of? Owner participation agreement. So, this is, obviously, more complicated than that, but in the -- in the short term this -- we don't see this as having a high demand of Administrator Squyres' time and we -- I guess we just -- we just want to talk about it. That's the goal. Let's talk about this in open dialogue.

Palmer: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Palmer.

Palmer: Madam Mayor, I guess my question is why wait for tomorrow. I would love to hear the discussion, unless you -- you know, you need preparation for whatever you're going to talk about. Like Councilman Cavener said, I'm just very curious, you know, what all of your opinions are as to what -- how to move forward now and what -- what your plans are and how we can help.

Winder: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Yes, Mr. Winder.

Winder: I'd like to just expand on what Jim talked about earlier. We have discussed it as an executive committee and I think as a committee we -- we all think that this is really just adding a few projects to the overall scope of what MDC does. It's not adding a whole new district like downtown. Downtown is a bunch of small projects, a lot of different property owners, you know, relatively similar size of areas, but just so many more property owners and so many more projects going on in downtown, but the lion's share of what MDC does will still be downtown and the Ten Mile District will be a few owner participation agreements that there will be work on the front end to get those put together, but once they are done there won't be the -- the day-to-day work that is done on the downtown district and so that's why I feel -- and I think the executive committee feels like that adding those responsibilities to our existing administrator, our existing legal counsel, our accounting firm and our auditing firm, it makes the most sense, because it's not adding a whole lot of expense. The actual amount of work that they will be doing is an incremental to -- it won't be the same as -- as what it's been for the downtown district and so it -- that's just the easiest, most cost-effective and efficient way and -- and, you know, we feel like it's been a good way of managing the downtown district to date and will be a good way to continue to manage the Ten Mile District.

De Weerd: I guess it does come at a time when wrapping it into the administrative duties today makes sense with the -- the contract expiring at the end of September and -- and I guess MDC needs to establish that process of putting that out. I know we had a one year renewable, but I haven't heard that description from the executive council or the board, so I don't know what the discussion is on that. Again, since the board hasn't discussed it is -- is that wrapped up into that processes and is this an in lieu, temporary gap until that goes out? So, the discussion and -- I guess with the additional administrative duties, it's no surprise to anyone. I have suggested that -- and Councilman Bird is sitting at my left, he will jab me with his elbow, but I think it's a full-time employee position that -- you know, is it a contract? Is it an employee? Then there is an opportunity for that discussion as well and might as well have it with -- with -- to see if there is any feedback from Council on that one, too. Go ahead.

Bird: I wasn't going to say anything until later -- and I'm wearing my MDC hat now. I don't see where -- I agree with the administration, keeping it now. I'm definitely not in favor of getting a full-time employee at this time. I think a subcontractor is much better. Having sat on this board since the day it was established, the first ten years we didn't do much but have studies. The last six years with the current administration we have

got now, we've got a lot accomplished. It brought a lot of people around that didn't think too highly of us downtown and stuff. We tried to throw money at stuff. It didn't work. So, I think until it proves different, there is -- and I think that our administrator and our legal firm can definitely tell us if they need help or want a change or anything, but I don't -- I don't see this as being that heavy, because as David said, we are just dealing with a couple of -- two or three landowners, where downtown you're dealing with hundreds of land owners and stuff, so I -- right now I think that we need to go along like we are. I'm sure we can -- we can handle it under the existing. I don't see it -- doing it any other way right now, because we don't really know what we are going to have and I have no idea what's going to be brought out there or what wants to be brought out there or -- you know. And I don't think anybody else does either. So, I think we need to stay with the status quo and -- and if we have to a year or so down the line, we can certainly do it at that time.

De Weerd: Well, it seems unfair to ask the current contract holders to -- to do more at the same price.

Bird: No. And I would agree -- I would agree with that, but I think our legal is paid on an hourly rate anyway. So, they would be doing that. Our administrator is on a contract and at that point, you know, we can certainly look at how many more hours would she be spending or they be spending, so -- no, I didn't -- I realize that. But I don't think 50,000 -- I don't think you're going to need that 50,000 dollars.

Mueller: So, I'm the new guy, Madam Mayor, so I don't -- I get to say lots of foolish things, because it's my first meeting like this and everybody just has to give me a pass. But just for the record --

De Weerd: Only the first meeting.

Mueller: Only the first meeting. Okay. You heard it. Just for the record I think it's -- Ashley, your contract ends in January; is that correct?

Squyers: Yes, Commissioner Mueller, it expires January 15th, 2017.

Mueller: Well, I think that -- I know that that seems like a dumb thing to bring up just for the record, but I think it's an interesting point to your point is that September doesn't give us a lot of time to really fully understand the amount of work that's going to come out of Ten Mile. The fact that the contract is actually renewable in January I think is interesting, because it does give us a little bit more time to get our hands around it and understand what's going on and all we really have to figure out is are we in a situation where one plus one actually equals two or one plus one actually still equals one; right? And, then, just be fiscally responsible; right? So, if we have until January on the contract I just think it's worth mentioning that that's probably enough time for us to get a better understanding of the amount of additional work that will be generated is my thought. But I don't know what I'm talking about by the way.

Bird: You got a good head.

Basalone: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Basalone.

Basalone: I think Commissioner Mueller is under-estimating his ability to analyze problems. He stated exactly what I would have stated, is that we have an existing contract with our current administrator. She is contracted with us to do whatever work is assigned to her by the Urban Renewal District under that contract. If in the future when that contract is up for renewal it would certainly be within her purview to request additional funds if she feels there is significant additional work that she has to do and as Commissioner Bird mentioned, the legal work that we have done for us is on an hourly rate basis, so that should not be a problem. So, I am strongly in favor of maintaining our administration as it currently is, but I have concerns about -- shall I say two-headed monster where we have the Urban Renewal District downtown with one administrator, we have the Ten Mile District with another administrator, and we have one board overseeing this and I just -- my feeling -- I think that makes it too bureaucratic. I think we are lean and mean right now in terms of what we are able to do and I'm confident that the current Council and administrator can handle it as has been mentioned before.

Cavener: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: And I don't know if anyone up here has an explanation and, Commissioner Mueller, I have said lots of dumb things and I'll probably say six or seven dumb things before this meeting is wrapped up, so you're in good company. What's -- what's the difference between a contractor versus -- versus an employee? And for me I'd like some clear definitions as to why some people feel one is more favorable and the other feels the other is more favorable and I don't know if -- if anyone here is --

De Weerd: I think I'm going to give that to Mr. Nary, because we certainly have had those conversations with our contractors and have even had IRS audit those very details on the difference between the two.

Nary: Thank you, Madam Mayor, Members of the Council, and Members of the Board. Council Member Cavener, I think to answer your question there is a couple things that you have with a contract that can be problematic sometimes and that's always an issue of concern regarding employment and the IRS issue as Madam Mayor has mentioned is probably the most prevalent one. So, when you contract with -- with an entity you have to be clear that they have their own independent ability to perform. You aren't directing their work. You aren't directing how they perform their work. You've merely assigning work that has to get accomplished in the way the contractor chooses to do that and so in some context that level of accountability is sometimes a concern,

because the person chooses their own hours, their own methods, their own style, those kinds of things and as an employee, obviously, you have a lot more accountability, because now you can direct the specific work, how it's to be performed, where to perform it, how to do those types of things. That separation is critical, because the IRS will determine whether or not you have given that level of independence to the contract. If you haven't, then, they are an employee and that means payroll taxes, those types of things, have to get attached and making the attachment retroactively both to the employer as well as to the employee. So, that's that avoidance you have to deal -- or concern you have to deal with and avoid that pitfall between contracting versus employment. Now, you want to make sure -- and one of the things we have looked at as a city a number of times is in the contracted situation who else do they work for, because that's an issue that the IRS concerns themselves with. If they only work for you, then, that can be a concern from the IRS's standpoint, because they may perceive -- they may have an entity or an LLC or something like that, but they don't work for anybody else and so, then, it looks more like a contracted employee than an independent and so that's -- in a nutshell that's a major difference of an employment relationship for a contractor or an employment relationship as a full-time employee.

Cavener: Okay.

Nary: Does that help?

Cavener: Uh-huh.

Nary: Did that prompt any questions before I --

Cavener: It does prompt a follow-up question. My assumption is is that the MDC has always been administrated through a contract or not through an employee?

Nary: Well, when Mr. Siddoway was doing that when he was a planner, that was in the infancy of MDC, he was a city employee at the time, but, then, once that switched to a contract subsequent to that -- that was back in 2003, Councilman Bird?

Bird: I'm trying to think. He wasn't there -- he was not there very long and the only reason they started is we had to get it in --

Nary: Yeah. It was to get it -- I believe -- I believe it was to get, basically, this implemented and that's all it was.

Bird: We had to get everything going and, then, immediately we hired a deal.

Nary: Uh-huh.

Bird: Having a little experience with subcontractors and IRS, Bill stated a hundred percent right, that if you're going to tell them when they have to be there and what they

have to do and when they have to do it, then, you better make them an employee, because you're going to be picking up all the back taxes and stuff. But I feel that with a -- with a subcontract we subcontract them to do a job for X amount of dollars and if it takes them ten hours to get it done, fine. If it takes them 50 hours to get it done, fine. You don't have to -- you don't pay their benefits. You don't have -- you don't have the problems of employees and if they want to pick up work outside of what they are doing for you, that's great, as long as they take care of your -- what you have got them contracted for. I -- I just have a real hard time of even thinking about getting an employee. It always seems like if you start one employee, the next year you will have two employees, the next year you will have five employees. So, I like the subcontract deal, because you know what it costs you, and -- and as long as you do it the right way and let them do their job as they want to do their job, but make sure it's done to your specifications.

De Weerd: Any other questions?

Cavener: Madam Mayor, I will keep going.

De Weerd: Mr. Cavener. I'm sorry.

Cavener: Councilman Bird I think did a fairly good job of kind of describing the perceived benefits of a contractor. I'm curious. What are the advantages of bringing on an employee and why -- I mean this is one of the five recommendations from the subject matter expert. I'm curious as to what -- how the MDC could benefit by having an employee versus a contractor.

Bird: Are you asking me?

Cavener: I was asking the Mayor.

Bird: Oh. Mayor. Okay. Ask the wrong guy.

De Weerd: Yeah. I think I just -- it was just in response to a lot of the feedback we get from the businesses and residents as well in the urban renewal district as a whole and their desire to have greater access to the administrator to have office hours and I think that Ashley has tried to address the office hours to the degree a contractor can and so it's been more in listening to our downtown community to have greater access. As you expand, now having two urban renewal districts -- and, yeah, I would agree with what the executive committee said. Administratively it may not seem that much more. It is a different skill set -- boy, it's been a long time since we have done an owner participation agreement, but that would seem to be more along the legal lines in developing those and once you get a strong template there may not be that much more to it. It's what the board would want to do and what would happen naturally. Do you see in the URD a partnership with the -- the property owners in finding the right employment, you know, and job creation. That's what that URD was for. It's for job creation. And that would be developed as Board Member Mueller said -- I didn't know

the contract went on a calendar year, rather than a budget year. So, at that point you can look at what -- what you would want to wrap into a new RFQ or RFP and if that was important to wrap that in. But an employer you have a little bit more flexibility to look at different responsibilities that respond to the -- the ebbs and flows of both downtown and this new URD that we don't know what it is quite yet, other than we have very few property owners and the legal agreements can be taken care of by our attorney, but what is that job creation piece to.

Cavener: Great.

De Weerd: Those are my thoughts anyway. And, again, it's my -- my push or my reasoning for a full-time employee is downtowns need a lot of attention and -- and the owners within -- the property owners within that district want a -- want a face and we have a face to it through the various tasks that the contract requires, but I don't think you can spend enough time on relationships and communication and transparency and those are things that are more the -- the grey area of contracts that is hard to detail out specific expectations. But I do respect that on the contract piece having a volunteer board overseeing an employee is difficult. But a volunteer board overseeing a contractor is equally so. So, you have pros and cons on both of them.

Winder: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Winder.

Winder: I would just like to add for the Council Members that we have negotiated owner participation agreements. For the downtown district we have a template that we have used that our legal counsel has done. You know, every one is negotiable, so we will have to spend some time dealing with them, but I think we have the expertise both with legal counsel and with board members in understanding and dealing with those and your concern about the -- the quality of employment or, you know, the -- that that's the -- the major reason for the Ten Mile District, I think that's in our plan -- or in the plan for the district and I think the board all has a good understanding that that's the intent of it and, you know, when it comes down to voting for or not for owner participation agreements, I think we all have that in mind that that's -- that's what we are asked to do is to try and accomplish the goals in the plan and so we will be the ones overseeing that. It won't necessarily -- or be ultimately responsible for that, it won't necessarily be the administrator, the legal counsel, or anyone else, it will be us as board members that will have the responsibility to make sure that that gets done.

Basalone: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Basalone.

Basalone: Thank you. Yeah. I think that, you know, your concern about accessibility of the administrator to property owners and business owners is a very legitimate concern, but I personally think it's being handled well. With the establishment of the

new Meridian Downtown Business Association, which our administrator attends on a monthly basis, any business property owner who has a concern who comes to that meeting and expresses their concern has accessibility to not only our administrator, but usually two Commissioner Zamzow and myself who are there on a regular basis and other members of our board. So, I think they do have accessibility. As far as e-mail communication, I think that the responses that I have seen from the administrator have been as prompt as possible, many to her detriment, because she does them at 11:00 o'clock at night, which I think she should be resting, but that's my personal fatherly advice. I am not concerned about that in the least. Our meetings are two meetings a month. One at 7:30 and one at 4:00 in the afternoon, are open to the public where we -- we relish public comment. We don't always get public comment, because there is no public there to make comment, but we certainly encourage it and want it and I hope that Frank and his piece that he writes will say please come if you have a concern and express it to the full board, because I would rather have concerns expressed to us, those of us who are tasked with making decisions, than going through Ashley and complaining to her. Complain to us directly if you don't like something we have done or come and praise us if you like what we have done or give suggestions. But I think those public meetings are really the way to get that input and I have not known of one case where Ashley has not responded promptly to any business owner in the downtown area who has asked for any kind of assistance. To my point, we have two facade improvement plans that are currently coming before the board. Both of those applicants were able to sit down with Ashley and go through that application process step by step and former facade applicants will express that same -- same of gratification for what she's done. So, while I understand it -- and I understand where Mr. Kushlan is coming from with this, he's probably worked with a lot of very large urban renewal agencies. Our budget of 790,000 a year for the last couple of years does not allow us to go out and hire people at 80, 90, a hundred thousand dollars a year with salary and benefits and have a human resource component and all the things that go into monitoring an employee's work progress. You know, if he's with Boise, for instance, and they have a three, four, five million dollar budget, I can see where they need it. At this point in time economically and also just from the standpoint of person-to-person responses I don't see any need for having an employee at this time.

Mueller: I have a question to anybody. One question I have is the actual role that an administrator is supposed to play -- because one thing I'm unclear on is -- so, I just started here and one of the first things I did to start is -- I have met with I think at least ten business owners in the last two weeks, I've met with a couple council members, I have met with about as many people as I possibly could to try to get an overall impression of the public's impression of MDC, the Council's impression of MDC, what do they think our job is, what do we know our job is, because that doesn't always align. You know, there is no such thing as perfect communication out there. But one thing I think that's interesting is, yes, to your point the public's invited to MDC meetings and we hope that they come. We -- I think it's a safe bet to know that we are not going to have MDC meetings to full auditoriums, but -- you know what I mean? So, there is a certain amount of being on the MDC -- and I see this, I see -- Escobar, I see you out there all the time. Ashley, I see you out there all the time. I think I have seen you

every day this week, actually. But the thing is the duty of the MDC communicating directly with the public seems to be a duty that rests on all of us, not only on the administrator, and there is a meat and potatoes piece to an administrator's job that's actually doing administration that's not -- it's separate from talking to the public, because I know just from my experience in the last two weeks I could spend every minute of every day meeting with the public. I have got proposals for our next meeting -- tomorrow for a meeting with some people that actually had good ideas that don't cost a lot of money or some of them not at all. It's a full -- that's a full-time job in and of itself. So, that's -- that's -- MDC has to figure out how to continually -- we have to continually figure out how to reinvent our communication to the public to engage them, because the public is going to come to a couple meetings and, then, they are going to go, because here's the truth, we all know this, our meetings aren't always the most interesting things. We may be talking about important stuff, but it's not the most interesting meeting to sit through. We could ask the public that's here right now, you know what you mean? So, we have to figure out how --

De Weerd: It's interesting, isn't it?

Mueller: Yeah. You're all thrilled right now. I know. At the edge of your seat. So, what my point is is we have to I think be careful to define the actual role of the administrator. They do need to be a voice to the public, but, actually, an administrator is the one, in my opinion, is more to coordinate the communication of the board to the public. They may not -- in fact, I see -- supposed to be the ambassador out there day in and day out, you know what I mean? And the reason I'm bringing that up is at the end of the day we are going to add some hours with Ten Mile. We don't know how many hours that is right now and until we know that it will be really hard for us to actually make a decision on this; right? So, I have a little bit of time to figure that out. But until we know that amount of hours, plus the amount of hours to actually do the core administered tasks, which is stuff that none of us on the MDC I would say want to do, because the packet that I get that gets prepared for every meeting, I look at it and I go, man, that -- that's probably pretty annoying to pull together. But that's -- you know, there is some core tasks the administrator does. So, my point is we got to add up the hours for the core tasks an administrator does. What is the core task an administrator does for Ten Mile at? Is that something that somebody can do within reason in a 40 hour work week? And, then, some of this stuff around public outreach and stuff, we know that that's part of her core job. We also know that that's a bigger part of our core job and leveraging her as the communication to the public. Does that make sense?

Bird: Very much so.

De Weerd: That means, board, get ready to go to work.

Mueller: Sorry.

Bird: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Bird.

Bird: To that point, Nathan, I -- that's why I like subcontractors, because if she gets to a point in the job that she don't feel one person -- she can hire somebody within her deal and we don't have to have another employee. And she might only need somebody for five hours a week.

Mueller: Then it's something to just --

Bird: And just something to -- and that's why I -- I like the subcontractor deal, so -- and, you're right, until we -- until we get this going we really don't know -- we don't know what we are going to do, you know. There might -- Ashley might be working 120 hours a week or she might be working two hours a week on this. I don't know.

De Weerd: Well, if you did more work she wouldn't have to do that much.

Bird: That's what I -- my get up and go got up and went.

Jensen: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Jensen.

Jensen: I think it's relevant to just point out that I have been on MDC for the last couple of rounds of RFPs for administrator services and every time we have had this -- this discussion. So, it's not a new thing for us to discuss whether it's going to be an employee or whether we are going to just do an administrator. So, just so that everybody knows that we are talking about this and we have talked about it in the past and we will talk about it when the next one comes up and we will discuss whether it makes sense at that time to do it or -- or not. But I just thought it was important that everybody knew that it has been on our radar over the past months, not something completely new.

De Weerd: Anything further on this or have we kicked this dead horse?

Palmer: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Palmer.

Palmer: I wanted to weigh in to that specific topic, but, then, add any other questions or anything. Just because my only line of question on it was, you know, what's the next step? You know, have the property owners met with the board or how -- what happens? Do you guys prepare the contract? Do they prepare the contract? Do you guys each do it and, then, get together and hash it out? How does that work? What -- how long, you know, do we anticipate between now and when there is a contract in place -- do that as far as he possibly can or maybe he's doing that anyway? I just wondered where do we go from here? Or where you go from here?

Winder: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Winder.

Winder: From MDC's standpoint -- and any other members speak up if they feel it's appropriate -- but our understanding is that we don't do anything until we are approached by the landowner to do something. They have to ask us to act first before we can do anything. And to this point we haven't been approached by anyone to do anything. So, we are -- we have just kind of been waiting and holding. We have been told there is something coming soon, but we don't know what that is. So, we really can't answer that. I guess that would have to be up to someone else to answer that.

Palmer: Madam Mayor, follow up?

De Weerd: Uh-huh.

Palmer: And the property owners are aware of that; right? Because my discussions with him -- well, with Turnbull, for example, you know, he pointed out -- he's like -- he said the words, you know, I'm not an expert in URDs. The city has approached me and we -- we work together and put together a much more exciting -- now I'm paraphrasing -- project and so I just -- if you know he's already preparing something to bring to you or if we need to give him a heads up.

De Weerd: I think he has a representative in this room that will make sure if he hasn't approached the MDC board -- and I think probably a process needs to be outlined and this board needs to have that discussion on maybe reaching out to the property owners and -- and detailing a process that would help anyone in developing a proposal to come to the MDC board and the steps it needs to go through to consider it. So, that's -- that's a good point and -- and something -- this is brand new. This new one is brand new and we do need processes to put together and certainly have to have a board discussion about it. And that was with my MDC hat.

Basalone: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Basalone.

Basalone: You know, just to expand a little bit on what Commissioner Winder was just talking about, I think it is critically important that the property owners approach us, not us approach them. It's their property. It's what they want to do with it. I think that we are in somewhat new ground in terms of economic development and I would hope that in that discussion with economic development personnel that the property owners are aware that they can utilize the URD as a part of their -- of their development process. But for us to go out and solicit them in any way I think would be wrong. It would be a wrong approach and I think it wouldn't be consistent with what the legislature is asking us to do in terms of urban renewal districts as well.

Palmer: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Palmer.

Palmer: And on that point we solicited him to create the thing in the beginning and so that's why I was hoping now that it exists and the clock -- the 20 year clock is running, that we make sure that he's aware of whatever he needs to -- because I mean he didn't even know this meeting was taking place and that we are going to be discussing his property until about six or seven hours ago I text him, hey, are you going to be here, he's like, no, should I have somebody there? I hope so. So, I -- I think if we need to approach him -- if somebody needs to send him word or -- just to make sure that we are moving on it, so that we don't get 20 years and go, well, we got a little late start, because we didn't realize who needed to talk to who and decide to create it again for another 20 years.

De Weerd: I do think it would be appropriate to -- to put a process in place and -- and the board can certainly have that discussion. But, fortunately, the property owners in that area are seasoned and I think they will figure it out. But I do think it's a good suggestion to put a process in place and let people know that that process is in place, so they know where to go to find it, so --

Bird: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Yes, Mr. Bird.

Bird: I think we have got a process in place that we used -- we might have to refine on it a little bit, but I'm sure it can be done and this -- and the way this was developed probably wasn't done right, Ty, with the developers. It was the city that approached him and did all that. MDC has never met with him to my knowledge. Nobody from MDC has ever met with him -- or met with them. So, it's a process that -- that's doable and I assure you that gentleman and his chief administrator that's sitting out there know very well how to do it.

De Weerd: And I might also note it's two weeks old. So, grass is not growing under anyone's feet here.

Palmer: Nineteen years, two weeks to go.

Item 4: Idaho Avenue Rightsizing Project Update and Next Steps (Caleb Hood and Marty Schindler)

De Weerd: Point taken. Any further discussion? Okay. I'm going to go ahead and move to Item No. 4, which is the Idaho Avenue right-sizing project update and what the next steps are and I see Caleb there in the corner.

Hood: Thank you, Madam Mayor, Members of the Council, Members of the MDC Board. I just wanted to take this opportunity while you're all together to provide you an update on this project, since it's a joint venture project and it was about a year ago that you were all in this very room, although in a little bit different configuration, where you said let's do that project after hearing the report out from Idaho Smart Growth and their associates, after doing the walkabout and talking with some members of the community about what projects would breathe some life into downtown. So, hopefully, you all have had a chance to swing out there, but there is an installation that has gone on a little past four or five weeks or so and it is complete and the invoices are rolling in, so I thought, again, the timing was right to provide you all an update on how that money that you budgeted has been spent. So, just a little bit of a refresher. The city did go out for RFP and bids on this project and we got one responsive bidder, but it was about 9,000 dollars over the 24,000 dollars that you guys had originally said to do this project with and so we worked with some individual contractors to make this happen and -- and some private parties as well. So, I would just like to just quickly -- and I know probably there is only a few people in the audience probably no one's going to read the minutes, but I do just want to go on record in recognizing businesses and the folks that have spent time making this thing happen, because there is quite a few. Meridian Cycle stepped up and although it's not out there yet, they are going to donate a bike rack -- the bike rack that was planned for this project. Rule Steel did all of the planters that are out there, the ADA ramp, and the subdecking materials that you can actually see in the top left picture. So, they manufactured all of that. Back to Black did all the striping, painting, and the candles that are on the corner -- in the top right corner there. So, it's Back to Black. The city's Parks Department worked with Cloverdale Nursery and Edward's Greenhouse to get all the plant material, the lava rock, really appreciate Parks placing these planters. They are very, very heavy. They were out there, several of their staff moving and put them into place. So, they were a great help. Integrity did the installation of the decking materials on top of the platform, so the -- the Fiberon decking, they put that all into place, cut it to size, screwed it all down and whatnot. ProBuild received that decking material from Fiberon and Fiberon cut us a really good deal on that -- on that material. Marty Schindler, who is here and I'm going to turn the mike over to him here in a minute just as part of the next steps part of this, he has some things that he wants to talk to you about. But Marty has dedicated hours and hours of time and effort and -- and not just with me, I mean he was out there in the field doing stuff, too. So, I just really appreciate Marty making this happen and, then, of course, you all for the financial resources and the feedback and the support to make this project happen and, then, last, but not least, A-Core did some of the asphalt grinding to kind of get this thing to grade. So, those are the community partners to this point I think we will have others that will step forward, but -- but it really has been pretty successful, at least from my standpoint, in that I will just share with you a little bit, because people ask me, you know, what kind of feedback have you gotten. Well, quite honestly, not a lot. I was expecting to hear more people complain, I was expecting to hear some praise, but, really, not a lot. I have heard a little bit of negative feedback. In fact, Ashley and I met with Idaho Independent Bank, Cassie -- I can't remember her last now -- yesterday on leaving their drive-thru and that first parking stall and not being able to see around and -- and there is a little bit of a learning curve for people to

retrain themselves. The roadway isn't as wide now. It's the same turning movement, you just have to kind of creep out a little bit further to see if there is oncoming -- oncoming traffic. So, worked with her. We are going to move that -- take Mark back a little bit in, so it provides a little bit more visibility. There is some folks that don't really -- aren't -- don't love the blue color of the area that's along the decking, but for the most part, again, most of the comments I have heard have been neutral, if not positive. I haven't heard a bunch of people say, yeah, this is the greatest thing since sliced bread, again, the complaints aren't there either. So, I think people are still getting used to it a little bit. I do see people parked over, you know, over the white line a little bit and things like that, but I think we will probably hear some more feedback in the coming months, but I haven't heard a lot of things to date. So, again, just kind of a final accounting, if you will. The invoices are rolling in and this -- the first bullet there. And just to refresh you all, budget at the beginning of the year you both set aside 15,000 dollars, to total 30, for the right sizing project and, then, earlier this year you appropriated the 24,000 to do this phase one, but we just saw pictures of them, what's out there in the street now. So, went right up almost to budget, \$23,281.83 for phase one. So, there is a balance of 6,500 dollars or so still left out of that -- that 30,000 dollars that was budgeted. So, some of the next steps -- I do want to share with you some of the -- the wheels are turning. There is -- there is dialogue going on among some of the business owners, property owners, about what some of the next steps could be to -- now that we have got this area how do we use it. One of the thoughts that Hillary Bodnar at city has talked about is on Friday, September 9th, there is an art walk and so really highlighting and using Idaho Avenue as part of that. The art walk would be in the evening from 5:30 to 8:30. I'm just going to read a couple of her bullet points that she gave me, talking points. The suggested art walk route will be along Main Street. Will include public art unveiling, an art show and reception at Initial Point Gallery and a chalk art competition on Idaho Avenue. We will also be hosting a campaign called Meridian Art Drop Week, which will conclude on the day of the art walk, so a little bit on that chalk art competition, then, that was mentioned there. MAC is partnering up with -- I'm going to butcher her name -- Lois Chattin, an art teacher at Renaissance High School, to bring a youth art competition to Meridian. The chalk art competition has a theme of Meridian Historic Downtown to complement the local effort to preserve and highlight Meridian's heritage. So, again, that's what's kind of envisioned on Idaho in this reclaimed area to do some chalk art work. Some of the details haven't been worked out. MAC is going to actually talk about this at their next meeting, which I think is next Tuesday or Wednesday when they meet. So, some of those details still need to be ironed out. But that's exciting that they are looking at this opportunity now to use Idaho for these types of activities going forward. So, we have created a space where the things like that can occur, so --

De Weerd: And they are looking for business sponsors for prizes, so --

Hood: And judges as well, but I cut that out of some of the notes that -- that was given, but --

De Weerd: Well, I never fail to use an opportunity to talk about -- this is your opportunity.

Hood: So, with that I think I'm going to turn the remaining couple of minutes over to Marty and talk about maybe some of the other activities regarding activation and maybe some other things.

De Weerd: Before you do that --

Hood: Yeah.

De Weerd: -- any questions that you -- you never pause or take a breath, so --

Hood: On purpose.

De Weerd: -- I will take this as an opportunity to -- to breathe and ask Council if there is any questions at this point.

Cavener: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: Caleb, a comment first and, then, a question. I really like it. So, if you haven't received any positive feedback, my apologies. I'm excited to be the first. I have been trying to work in downtown Meridian at least once a week and I have really enjoyed it. I have noticed, though, that some of that blue either looks chipped or faded. Is there an issue with the paint? Are we able to get that resolved with -- what's the status with that piece?

Hood: Yeah. So, Madam Mayor, Councilman Cavener, that's one of the things, actually, after we left that meeting with the bank yesterday and I talked with Marty, we actually have some extra paint that was left with us from Back to Black after they painted that. Some of the scarring you see there is from them trying to get the decking level. So, I'm going to go back out and get a roller and I will paint some of that.

De Weerd: Oh, no.

Hood: And, then, do that stripe, too, as well. So, we will clean that up a little bit, but that's what it is is -- the scarring you see is from them trying to get that decking level -- level and some of the --

De Weerd: Well, tell me when you do that, because I will help.

Cavener: I will come help, too.

De Weerd: I'm really good at --

Hood: But thank you. I appreciate it.

Bird: I'm a good supervisor.

De Weerd: And my only question is -- and maybe Marty will answer this -- is -- and Councilman Bird kind of said something similar to -- my thought is when are we going to get some furniture out on those decks? I mean you drive by there and you were hoping to see some kind of outdoor dining presence or people sitting or standing on them or something, but they are just kind of --

Hood: As Marty walks forward, he's going to do a better job, because some of that decking is in front of property that he owns, but I will let you know, too -- and he can reiterate this -- but Lisa with Frankie's Java -- kind of came into this middle to late of this and she's like what's going on, there is a decking going on in front of my business, but she's aware of that I think there is some plans that are in the works for her to put some -- some furniture out there. Same thing with the -- I can't think of the technology company that's on the end. Tribute. Thank you. And they have -- by the way, they had on the first day of Dairy Days they had a barbecue out there and were using that space for a barbecue and talked with them and I think at least initial conversations with them they plan on having some street furniture out there as well and, then, again, I will let Marty kind of provide any updates or talk about the metal decking platform that's next to his property.

De Weerd: Okay. Thank you. Was there any further questions before Marty starts? Thank you for joining us, Marty, and I know we have said this before, but we appreciate the -- the time you have put into this and certainly we all know that you're passionate about this project and thank you for being here.

Schindler: Madam Mayor and Commissioners and Council Members, thank you for allowing me a few moments to stand before you tonight. So, Caleb, thank you and Bruce Chatterton thank you for all the use of the resources, not only financial, but also human capital came to be a real big help to me.

De Weerd: Maybe we need an office for you here.

Schindler: That would be nice. I would like to bring that up in a further conversation. But I do want to point out that -- so, the word employee -- and an employee going out and painting is kind of retroactive to our previous conversation, so we don't have to hire -- or have another consultant brought in to do this, utilizing an employee.

De Weerd: No. We -- we have volunteers.

Schindler: Yeah. So, it works out for all -- it's all well. We have -- you know, last year we -- I came before you and we started promoting the idea from an Idaho Smart Growth plan the topic -- item number seven came up, which became Idaho Avenue. In

that -- at the time I was looking at some property on Idaho Avenue and when this went a little bit further I purchased that property. The reason I purchased the property was twofold. One was the opportunity to engage in community activity, knowing that I was going to be retiring from a former employee, what am I going to do with my life. So, I'm the founder of C3 Environments and also I will be introducing a new company to Meridian shortly called Urban Verticals, which is a horizontal vertical construction company. I have three partners that have roughly a hundred years of construction expertise and we plan to make a little bit of an impact in the local town. Idaho Avenue came about -- and it's really what you see today, the blue zone -- I will start back from the right size of it, actually the reclaiming of the property -- or city right of way. We reduced that from 54 feet to 22 feet. That gave us the opportunity -- which you see the decks out there today are really an idea -- an ideology for the word and term called prototyping. Prototyping is the extension of the sidewalks, which we hope to see in the next three to four years, and so I'm glad you brought up the word furniture. So -- and that's one of the reasons I'm here tonight was to talk about so what's next, what do we do. What is that blue area? Well, that blue area is really an extension that today we know we can't feasibly afford to lay platform end to end, it would be around 290,000 dollars to encompass both sides. So, there is no reason to spend that money. But I do see the need to create further activity on the street. So, one of the things that comes to my mind -- and I stood before MAC about six months ago, was the proposition of bringing up artwork. Artwork in the blue area -- today we use the word -- and a term called urban art and I think we have some photos of it. So, urban art you can see takes many forms and shapes. These are only just a few that we pulled up. But these art you will see sometimes horizontally, vertically. Today our canvas is that blue. So, how do we bring in about -- and create community activities? Art is a great way to expression. Art is also a great activity for further attraction, both for local and for tourism. So, there is a twofold meaning there. One is we -- by laying a canvas out there today, what you see as blue, which will later become areas of art. Those art -- we are still working on how this concept will go. I'm meeting on Thursday with Hillary and some of -- a team that we formed. We are looking at other grant ways and opportunities to create funding for other activities and other -- and other contributions from -- for the private sector, too. You know, today we have -- as Caleb said, we have roughly 6,500 dollars left in our budget -- is that correct?

Hood: Uh-huh.

Schindler: And I'm here to ask for assistance in moving that to -- and Caleb could help me with the terminology, but I would like to utilize that last 6,500 dollars. One is on the 9th we would like to do a street dedication. With that we would like to, you know, close down the street and start to bring about some public event -- maybe it could be the form of live music. We will have art on the street. We will use a little bit of a tool for post -- to create some posters to get out throughout the valley. And I -- I want to, you know, encourage Council Members in MDC that I think, you know, it's time to -- from my point of view and why I'm standing before you tonight is, you know, my -- I'm all about the Intercity, because I really don't care what goes on around us, because there is developers that are doing it every day. What I don't see is in our heart of our city a

lot of activity and that's why I am here is to help drive some further activity. There are things that I know Madam Mayor knows, that Bruce Chatterton know about, that, you know, we have people today -- we are talking about other things that could happen soon and more of that will come to be shed to light. We have other projects that we want to implement. If you -- when you walk out of City Hall today I want you to look to the east and what do you see? And what do we do? These are the things that we need to start to approach and begin to develop some -- some ideas of what could be. Along our own street, along Broadway, we see properties that are in decay and I want to be able to -- you know, before I die -- and I'm getting old, you know. I could drop dead now I feel like at times. But before I do, you know, I would like to see some things happen in this city. It's a great city, it's in the heart of Treasure Valley, and I think we all are here with the same means, that we want to see great things happen. So, with that, you know, we have a balance of 6,500 dollars. I would like to acquire that money to help facilitate these events, in partnership with MAC on the 9th and I can't give you a correct -- in intermittent discretionary amount of what that is, but I believe that through Caleb's praction with budgeting that he could probably help me with that. We threw out some ideas of what they are. They are developing some posters art for -- to spread around the city. That dollar amount is roughly about a thousand dollars. Live music comes to about five to eight hundred dollars for a two hour event. I would also suggest that we -- we help support the artist in some way fashion with our -- for supplies. We need roughly a thousand dollars in paint. I would also like to give out an award to the best artwork and I'm not sure that's going to be in Hillary's boat. We are going to talk more about that on Thursday. But I'd like to be able to create an award, so -- a first, second, and third place. And what is that today? I'm not sure. Somewhere between five hundred dollars and a thousand dollars. I think that the private enterprise would come to help sponsor some of this, though I'm not clear to who that it is today. But we are thinking -- I think that -- to step back a little bit, you can see that I'm able to go out and attract sponsors. I think that one time we -- when we actually went out to the RFP, the amount that came back in was 32,000 dollars to construct what you see out there today. I know Caleb had called upon me and asked for a little bit of further help and I gladly did so, since I was the one that was leading the flag to try to get this done I felt -- accountability is one word that I feel that I -- that I am justified in helping with the project. I think I have been accountable all the way through and I will continue to do so. I also wanted to bring up the point that the Idaho Avenue is a three-year pilot program and I see it beginning on Idaho Avenue between Main and 2nd, but extending from Main to 3rd over time. In the year 2019 ACHD is slated to resurface the street and at that point we may want to take a look at what else could be done or what has been done. You know, we will take it upon ourselves to form a set of matrix, you know, where we are today, what happened, and how has it really brought further economic development to that area. These are all things that I don't know how I'm going to go about it today, but I will have answers for that in the future. Any questions?

De Weerd: Thank you, Marty. Any questions from Council or MDC board members?

Bird: Just a big thank you for what you have done.

De Weerd: No comments? So, I know you have made a request and I love these examples and I see that they would be more of the lighter, quicker, cheaper, more permanent pieces to the redevelopment and the -- the interest on Idaho Avenue. What I would -- have never anticipated the funds to be spent for is an event. I -- I think that's the Downtown Business Association's responsibility. There needs to be skin in the game and -- and I think that the city and MDC have stepped forward to -- but the -- the business owners along there -- I see you here. I see Josh. I see Nathan here. But where are the rest of them? You know, where is the commitment from the others to being a part of it. I see the Meridian Arts Commission stepping forward and bringing in events to Idaho Avenue. The Historical Preservation Commission has created a program to bring people into our downtown. Where are the business owners and what is their interest and what is their skin in the game? I'm sorry, I think that government should spoon feed only so much and I think we have done a lot. I don't want to offend you, Marty, because I see what all you have done.

Schindler: Madam Mayor, let me answer that question in part anyway. So, we do have some contributing ideas from local store owners on that street and they look forward to seeing what else is going to be done by DBA. Unfortunately, I don't see anybody here from DBA, so I can't account for them. What I can say is this, is that I think that there should be a greater sense of ownership instilled upon DBA and how is that done, I'm not sure. I don't have all the answers. And I'm not a public figure and have no wish to be. I do want to see DBA succeed, but I also see problems there and I have discussed that with a few, but I don't think -- the heart of the question is is, you know, we have stepped up to the plate, we have spent 24,000 dollars, basically, and do we stop there? I don't believe so. I think that failure is only brought on upon ourselves by not looking further out into the future. I still think we still need to drive forward and create an urban environment downtown that has a unique sense of place. That's all we are talking about is placemaking and I see that as a roll of economic development and I have talked with Brenda Sherwood recently about helping me get the message out. I see Ashley, too, recently just walking the streets and, you know, I commend everything that she's done -- I hope I didn't say that wrong, but don't take it that way. See, you guys are warped, you know.

De Weerd: It's like, wow, Ashley.

Schindler: But see that -- and the reason I bring that up -- I see also a change of heart within the MDC board and thank you, Mr. Basalone, for inviting the public to your meetings, because I think there is a lot of things that need to be changed, in my opinion. And I'm a taxpayer, I support funding to MDC on several accounts, and I see the need to keep driving the message. I think one of the key things is public outreach. You know, have I done a great job? I think I have done a fair job, but not good enough. And -- but I'm one individual and I also have a desire to see this continue -- this process continue. So, I ask, Madam Mayor, how would you help me do this?

De Weerd: How would I help you?

Schindler: Yeah. What would you suggest?

De Weerd: I would suggest having a downtown call to business type of meeting and -- because what goes on in our downtown is driven by the city. We, through our Arts Commission, provide Concerts on Broadway in partnership with the MDC. We brought the Meridian Youth Farmers Market in partnership with the MDC. We have the art drop and these art activities from a city commission. I had Steve from the Smoke Shop say we need to do a chalk art. We have the school district stepping up and doing it. I'm not sure if Steve's involved in that at all, but I -- I believe the city is very vested in our downtown and being a partner, but we can't be the one and only and that's -- I can say we are doing things in our downtown. If you want me personally to do something, I would be more than happy to volunteer. But I would say that I think that our staff and the hours of dedication they have put to Idaho Avenue in helping put this all together, our Parks Department in helping with the beautification of our downtown and the planter boxes, they do a lion's share. With the MDC funds, they do a lion's share. It's now the property owners -- they need to step up and come together and that's all I can say.

Schindler: I don't disagree. Madam Mayor, I don't disagree with that. And I'm very appreciative of everything that's taken place and things that have been done here and around City Hall, so don't misconstrue what I had said, please. I am grateful for what's been done and what can be done in the future.

De Weerd: But, Marty, I would love to see that -- those funds -- and I don't know about anyone else up here, because they're unusually quiet. Maybe they are letting me dig my own hole. But I would love to see that spent on something more permanent. Do you do something like this -- this art that you have shown us that shows imagination and would draw people downtown to -- to go and see it and you partner with the Meridian Arts Commission and say how can we put this to -- to use to draw artist to -- to be involved. I would be more than happy -- and I know music groups I can ask if they would come and play. I'm very thrifty and I like to volunteer people. Some people call it voluntold, but I would be willing to help, but I don't think that that is the city's responsibility in looking at the lighter, quicker, cheaper funds to do an event. You would want to see it add to the fabric and to that the -- the allure of bringing people into the downtown. That's one person sitting up here's opinion and I see a lot of people on either side of me that I'm sure have their own as well to pass along.

Bird: Madam Mayor?

Basalone: Madam Mayor? I'm sorry, go ahead. Madam Mayor, I agree with you wholeheartedly. I think that what we have created -- what you have created, Marty, through your leadership on Idaho Avenue -- to keep the art metaphor going, you have creative a canvas and now it's really up to artists being the -- the innovative business people on that street to utilize that canvas to not only enhance their own business, but to enhance downtown and to make it a viable place for families to come. So, I do think

it is something that MDBA has to take responsibility for and I brought this up at the last MDBA meeting, which was not well attended because of summer vacations and all that and I intend to bring it up at the -- at the July meeting -- is that MDBA has asked for the right to help sponsor activities, not only on Idaho Avenue, but within downtown and the city has expressed the willingness to allow MDBA to do that. In order for MDBA to do that they need to be able to cover any liability to insurance that the project would -- would require and I take it upon myself to make some inquiries with local insurance agents about what kind of liability insurance would be needed. It is not excessive. It is certainly doable. You need to know what the activities are, such as the art walk and the chalk art and so forth, and it can be done on a case-by-case basis and once we have a string of these activities 13, 14 for the year, you can have a policy that covers all of those activities and which, then, makes it easy for any business owner through MDBA to utilize that street, because the insurance coverage would already be there for whatever the public exposure would be. So, I think it can be done. I think, though, that looking at MDBA in its second year, it's taking baby steps, it's learning to work with a budget, to solicit businesses to pay 150 dollars a year, which I wish most downtown businesses would do. A hundred and fifty dollars is pretty cheap public relations for what you get from it -- that that money could be used to fund the support structure to do the operational things of the activities that you're requesting. But, you know, I think we have seen before and it was before my time on the MDC board -- Keith and Madam Mayor that -- you were on it. I think you're aware of it. And Eric is probably aware of it -- that MDC tried to fund activities downtown and it was absolutely turned out to be a waste of money, because you're doing it for people, rather than them doing it for themselves and I think we need to teach people to fish rather than handing them fish and I think that we can do it. I think we have got Josh, we have got you, we have got Lisa, who owns Frankie's Java. We have got the people coming in that are going to be inhabiting your location and many others who have that innovative spirit and that creativity and I think we are going to encourage some of the longtime people that, gee, maybe I can do this easily and it isn't the terrible thing that I think it's going to be and all the extra work. It could be fun for them and enhance their businesses.

Escobar: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Escobar.

Escobar: Marty, first and foremost, you have worked tirelessly to do this and, again, gratitude towards you. Thank you for that and, please, keep your energy high, because you have a good impact in what's happening downtown and as a downtown business owner, downtown property owner, member of the MDBA, member of the MDC, being involved in those avenues, if I were to have painted the picture you just painted for me as a business owner I would be a sponsor as a business owner in downtown.

De Weerd: There is your first --

Escobar: I would volunteer. I'm a sponsor to support activities like this, because I believe in the core of our city. I would venture to guess there is probably a few others sitting up here who might be willing to be sponsors as well and I don't think it's going to be hard to get to the -- to the dollar figure you're looking for and I think the MDBA is the correct tool to be able to reach out to those types of sponsors. So, in your request as what's a solution, I think that's a very viable solution. They could paint the picture within weeks.

Schindler: Thank you.

Cavener: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Cavener.

Cavener: First thanks for the compliment on calling me unusually quiet. I appreciate that. Second, to no surprise, I disagree with -- with the comments that we have heard tonight. We as a group voted to invest some money in a very unique project in downtown and it seems as -- as a city we have a ribbon-cutting for everything. We have a ribbon cutting for parks. We have a ribbon cutting for bathroom to parks. We have ribbon cuttings for buildings that are on parks. Why do we do that? Because we are proud of the investment. We want to celebrate this. We want to invite the public. Well, I'm proud of this project. I want to celebrate it. And we -- MDC -- because I have an old MDC hat I pulled out of the closet. I'm going to put it on, because that's what we are doing tonight. We would always say we want business owners to come to us with ideas. We have got a visionary business owner coming to us with an idea, asking for some help with an investment. Now, I agree with the Mayor, I agree with Commissioner Basalone, it probably shouldn't be driven solely by city and MDC funds. But I guess maybe that's not what I heard that it was solely from us. I think we have got a visionary downtown business owner who has got a unique idea to celebrate an investment that we agreed was important for downtown and I just -- I'm surprised that we are saying we don't want to do that. That was a great idea. So, let's not turn our backs to it. Let's be open. Let's let somebody who is visionary and creative like Marty come up with a plan, bring it back as a proposal, and, then, we can discuss it on its merits, as opposed to just saying no. I will hop off my soapbox.

Schindler: Thank you.

Cavener: Thank you, sir. I appreciate you being here.

De Weerd: I volunteered my personal time and --

Cavener: I'm too busy painting the sidewalk.

De Weerd: I'm already doing that, too.

Cavener: Well, I guess I better come with you and do that as well.

De Weerd: You're right. And, then, you can be part of my band that is going to be the entertainment, too.

Cavener: I play a mean recorder.

Winder: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: I will drive people off, but -- you know. Yes, Mr. Winder.

Winder: Now I forgot what I was going to say. But I guess I'm kind of along the same line of thinking as Luke. But I see this as similar to what we have done with Concerts on Broadway where I think MDC is the single largest sponsor of Concerts on Broadway, if I'm not mistaken, but we -- we consciously made the decision that we wouldn't do it unless there were private partners that stepped up to the plate, too, and we make sure that we weren't the largest advertiser on their -- on their promotional materials and everything. I see this as something where we should encourage something like that, too, where we could participate to an extent, we shouldn't be the only source, but I think it's good to get people into downtown and I think celebrating a successful project -- I know in my -- my own line of work I get calls every day from people, because they see things are going on in downtown Meridian now that weren't going on a few years ago, whether it's, you know, the businesses that have opened recently, the people that have invested money in -- in renovating buildings in downtown, the branding and signage that's gone up, there is a real buzz going on in downtown Meridian and I think we need to capitalize and continue that. There is people that want to open businesses here. There is people that want to build buildings here and -- and unless that momentum keeps going they are going to not come here, because it's not the easy thing to do and so I think it's in the interest MDC and downtown property owners and everybody to help with an event like that, because I think it just is necessary to keep the ball rolling.

Schindler: Thank you, Commissioner Winder.

Palmer: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Mr. Palmer.

Palmer: Madam Mayor, I'm going to agree with Councilman Cavener and it's about spending money. I -- I know. Right? I voted to create an urban renewal district, budget amendment -- here we go. I mean I -- I have been driving up Idaho Street as this has been being built out and I think we put the money into it, now we need to -- you know, if we have got a little money left we need to do what it takes to drive a few eyeballs onto that street, so that they see what's happened there, because there is no way they are going to otherwise, unless they -- they are the kind of people that frequent those businesses that are there anyway. And so I also offer myself, if there is anything that I can do, if you need a flower pot needing moved I'm a big guy, I can get

a lot of momentum and move it. If somebody -- if one of the businesses -- hopefully buys a table that they want to put it out there, an umbrella, and they need access to a truck and a trailer to help get it there, let me know. I want to do whatever I can to help make this a successful investment now that we have done it.

Schindler: Thank you, Commissioner Palmer.

Bird: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: Were you committing city dollars to it or just your personal resources?

Palmer: Myself.

De Weerd: No. He was committing --

Palmer: I have got access to a truck and a trailer -- I have moved a lot of furniture --

De Weerd: He can be on my band, too.

Palmer: Yeah. I can move heavy stuff. So, whatever I can personally do just as a citizen to help drive people there, I want to do it.

De Weerd: We are going to have an eclectic band, too. Yes, Mr. Bird.

Bird: Madam Mayor. I'm not going to be in your band, but -- anyway, I have to agree with Mayor that, you know, government can do so much -- throw money at so much stuff, but unless you get the people that are down here day in and day out to buy into it -- yeah, we have a great one-time event, because we throw the money at it, but I'd like to see something that is a continuum event, you know, like Alive After 5:00. Tammy and I have discussed that for --

De Weerd: Years.

Bird: -- years and the only time we could have it was Tuesday and we are both tied up on Tuesday night, so -- but I think -- I think we need to have the businesses involved financially, sweat equity, whatever they want to do. I have no problem giving a little bit of slush money to start, but I -- I don't want -- I do not want the MDC or the City of Meridian the backer. It's got to be done -- it's got to be done from within the business community down there. It will be much more successful, it will get more people down there and it's something they can buy into and be very proud of. That's my point.

De Weerd: That was seed money, not slush money.

Bird: Yeah, she --

De Weerd: You heard him wrong. He said seed money. Any other comments? I think the -- yes, Mr. Borton.

Borton: Yeah.

De Weerd: Another committee member.

Borton: And --

De Weerd: And sponsor.

Borton: And sponsor. Here is what I would suggest I guess is the devil is in the details. Bring back the proposal. We have done all of these types of things before. You know, the Meridian Merchants Association back in the day ran a scarecrow festival and we had the buy in from the business community. It's difficult to maintain continuity year over year, but these things have been done and can be done again, whether it's that type of festival is reborn and done annually and our Christmas in Meridian, which is organized by the city, but it's funded by private businesses who say I will participate. I cannot organize it, I'm running a business. I can't herd cats and figure out how to do it, but I will fund and contribute like the New Design Street Fair we are going to have -- well, I will contribute to it and that's how a great event happens, like Christmas in Meridian, for example. So, that might be an opportunity where if there is an entity that can organize the event you'll get businesses to sponsor it and they will do that on a repeat basis, so -- and with that type of structure and that type of buy in from the downtown business community with their dollars to back an event, that seems like it would give the city more of an incentive to perhaps match or fund and be reimbursed in similar ways we have done it for other events. So, it provides some structure to having it be successful and get that buy in from the business owners.

De Weerd: So, look at what you created. You created a sponsor with Jim Escobar. You have a sponsor of as Joe Borton. You have physical labor out of Ty Palmer. You have the same with Luke Cavener. I will be a sponsor and on your planning committee and Dan Basalone will, too. And so will Josh. Come on up. So, see, we almost planned an event here, because Marty wants us to and we are on your team, Marty.

Evarts: Mayor, Council Members, Commissioners. I'm in appreciation also, since I have property sitting on Idaho Avenue. I have seen Marty out there, because I'm enjoying cigars while I'm watching him work and it's literally every day. Even to the point that I saw him out there on an early morning like watering plants, because he was passing that duty off to the actual business owners and we are all chuckle heads and we are not actually doing our part, so -- and this actually relates to our first order of business, even with the administration, do not let the downtown business owners off the hook. We are not doing our part. You know, when -- when Dan and Ashley and -- and folks are at these MDBA meetings and I'm not, we have to be held to a higher standard and I think one of the things that Marty is probably feeling right now is people are offering dollars and everything like that, but Marty's MDBA, he is one person sitting

there and until that group really gets on the ball and activated, you guys should feel no obligation to provide any kind of resources and financing to that effort. We -- we really need to do our part and get our act together. We can't even bill ourselves for our own dues, so -- so if we can't do it, it's completely irresponsible for city taxes to be contributing to anything that would benefit us; right? We can't get out of own way. So -- so, I would just encourage you -- and I'm really talking to myself here -- like challenge us there. Like if there is something that you can do -- Dan, you know, as an MDC, Ashley -- like next time we have an MDBA meeting I think it's totally appropriate to say, look, DBA, you have got all kinds of investments we have been making and we are seeing nothing out of you. You should be a little bit embarrassed right now and what are you going to do this month to get your finances squared away, because it sounds like you have got people like Marty that are doing really innovative things that are begging you to like go activate and do stuff and you can't get out of your own way. So, that would be my two cents. Any questions? And there is a standing invite for cigars at the Vault for anybody. So, really, I'm disappointed that Nathan is the only one taking me up on it on a regular basis, so -- anything? Nothing? All right.

De Weerd: Thank you, Josh. Mr. Basalone.

Basalone: Madam Mayor. If we had ten Joshes and ten Martys we wouldn't be having this discussion, because all these things would be done. And Josh is absolutely right, we need to encourage the other business owners to participate, but we have to have a structure in place that outreaches to them and makes sure that they understand what they are getting for their 150 dollars and why we need their involvement and how they can utilize this great resource that Marty and Josh and Caleb have helped build.

De Weerd: I agree with Luke to the point where if we want to do a ribbon cutting we can do a ribbon cutting, can't we, Ann?

Little Roberts: Absolutely.

De Weerd: But I will tell you that when we do that we do it with volunteers and business sponsors and maybe we will help find the sponsors, but it's not the city dollars. We cut a ribbon on an interchange and that was funded by the business community and I want to be on your team, I want to celebrate the success, I want to celebrate the efforts that many people have put into this and I will be on your planning committee, but I -- I think that this is not a city funded thing and I will personally sponsor and you have several others up here that would do that, but -- and I know your frustration, Marty, because sometimes I think when I get involved in something I'm the only one doing something. I know where you're coming from. So, that's --

Schindler: Madam Mayor?

De Weerd: -- why you now have a huge team on your side.

Schindler: Great. Thank you, Madam Mayor, Commissioners and Council Members and I will be back.

De Weerd: Anything else for the good of the order? I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

Bird: So moved.

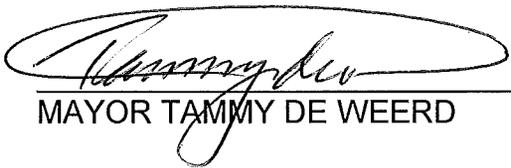
Cavener: Second.

De Weerd: All those in favor say aye. All ayes. Thank you.

MOTION CARRIED: ALL AYES.

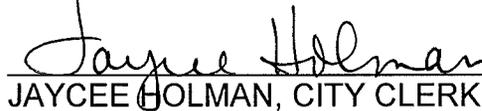
MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:07 P.M.

(AUDIO RECORDING ON FILE OF THESE PROCEEDINGS)


MAYOR TAMMY DE WEERD

8 1 9 1 1 6
DATE APPROVED

ATTEST:


JAYCEE HOLMAN, CITY CLERK

