



NEWS RELEASE

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Meridian builds budget to meet needs of growing community

Meridian, ID - (August 20, 2013) – The Meridian City Council unanimously passed the fiscal year 2014 budget Tuesday night, which totals \$89,285,963. Councilmembers took the state allowed 3% increase, however, homeowners will see a 6.2% decrease in their property tax levy rate because new families and business have continued to move into the community.

“The budget Council approved tonight ensures the level of service provided to our citizens stays consistent with the quality they have come to expect,” said Mayor Tammy de Weerd. “The city has limited resources and lots of demands for the services we provide, especially with continued residential and commercial growth. In the end, I’m proud of the city’s directors. They did an excellent job of developing a fiscally responsible budget while still meeting the needs of our community.”

The Council set money aside for planned facilities and services, maintaining the policy of saving for future capital needs. The Council allocated \$60,000 to expand an existing Valley Regional Transit route into Meridian, budgeted for the edition of two new councilmembers in January, put \$750,000 toward future indoor gym space for the community and \$2.5 million to build a public safety training center for the city’s emergency responders.

Public safety continues to be a top priority in Meridian. In fiscal year 2014, the fire department will replace a 31-year-old fire engine and the police department will hire a new special victims investigation detective to ensure criminals who target children in Meridian are caught and held accountable. Meridian’s public works department is expanding its laboratory at the Waste Water Treatment Plant to ensure treated water meets all the pollutant testing requirements and is safe to return to Idaho’s waterways.

One of the larger investments being made by the city is to install fiber to connect city hall with the fire stations, police department, and five other city buildings. The total cost is \$1.4 million.

“It is important that all city employees are able to communicate with one another quickly and seamlessly in emergency situations,” said De Weerd. “Fiber will also open up training opportunities keeping employees in their service zones and expanding the use of technology to communicate. With Meridian’s current wireless system some employees experience delays with their computer and phone systems with no backup.

Fiber will eliminate those delays and be much more reliable, improving service for our citizens.”

The new budget will go into effect October 1, 2013.

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The City of Meridian is located at the center of the Treasure Valley in southwest Idaho, minutes from the State Capitol. Founded in 1893 and incorporated as a city in 1903, Meridian is now one of Idaho's largest and fastest growing communities. As the home to many young families, Meridian is a vibrant community whose mission is to be a premier city to live, work and raise a family. Family Circle Magazine has selected Meridian as one of their Top 10 Best Cities for Families, Money Magazine's named it one of the 100 Best Places to Live, and America's Promise Alliance and ING have named Meridian one of the nation's 100 Best Communities for Young People five times. For more information about Meridian, visit www.meridiancity.org.