



CITY OF MERRILL
FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
AGENDA • THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2024

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

6:00 PM

To attend remotely call 715-802-6783 PIN 704 106 722 #

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Consider approving minutes from the previous meeting**
 - 1. February 1st meeting minutes
- III. General Agenda Items for Consideration**
 - 1. Fair Update
 - 2. Rodeo Update
 - 3. Permanent Vendor Update
 - 4. Calendar of Events
 - 5. Continued discussion on offering discounts to organizations to use the Festival Grounds
 - 6. Continued discussion and update on campgrounds at the Festival Grounds
- IV. Monthly Reports**
 - 1. Monthly Report - Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund
 - 2. Consider placing monthly reports on file
- V. Public Comment**
- VI. Date and Time of Next Meeting - Thursday, April 4 at 6:00 PM**
- VII. Adjournment**

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**CITY OF MERRILL
FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, February 1, 2024 MINUTES**

Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Mayor Steve Hass, Alderperson Steve Sabatke and Alderperson Mike Rick, George Henrich (Rodeo rep), Brad Becker (Fair rep). Alderperson Michael Caylor and Becky Meyer were absent.

Others Present: City Clerk Anderson-Malm, City Attorney Hayden, Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund, City Attorney Akey, Social Media Specialist Savall, David Buck and Merrill Community Media video operator.

- I. **Call to Order** - Chair Hass called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- II. **Minutes from previous meeting** – Alderperson Rick made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2nd meeting. Alderperson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried.

- III. **Agenda Items for Consideration:**
 1. **Fair Update** – Brad Becker gave an update stating everything is in order.

 2. **Rodeo Update** – George Henrich gave an update stating everything is in order.

 3. **Permanent Vendor Update** – no update given

 4. **Calendar of Events** – The calendar was included in the packet.

 5. **Discussion on promoting the Festival Grounds:**
 - a. **Update and discussion on Food Truck event May 18, 2024** – Social Media Specialist Savall gave the committee an update. She stated all is going well. She would like 15 food trucks. Five trucks have been confirmed and paid.

 - b. **Update and continued discussion on camping** – Mayor Hass provided an update and has an email into County Administrator Krueger with a few questions. He will provide further update at the March meeting.

 6. **Discussion on offering discounts to organizations to use the Festival Grounds** – Mayor Hass addressed the committee regarding this request and concerns in setting a precedent. City Attorney Hayden advised the committee to be cautious with this type of decision. Following discussion, this will be evaluated and brought back to the March meeting for further discussion.

- IV. **Monthly Reports:**
 - Monthly Report – Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund** – There was no formal report included in the packet. FGM Bjorklund discussed a number of rentals for the Expo Building.

Aldersperson Rick made a motion to place his report on file. Aldersperson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried.

- V. Public Comment** – There was no public comment
- VI. Establish date and time of next meeting** – The next meeting will be Thursday, March 7, 2024
- VII. Adjournment** – Aldersperson Rick made a motion to adjourn. Aldersperson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:17 PM

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm City Clerk

UP COMING EVENTS AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

2024

March	3/1-2/2024	Gun Show
	3/7/2024	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	3/9/2024	Celebration of Life
	3/14-15/2024	Lincoln County Economic Summit
	3/23/2024	Wedding
	3/30/2024	Possible Lange Auction Every Monday & Wednesday evening – Pound Classes
April	4/4/2024	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	4/12-13/2024	Trinity PTO Auction
	4/26/2024	Anabaptist Health Ministries Business Event Every Monday & Wednesday evening – Pound Classes
May	5/2/2024	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	5/4-5/2024	Wedding
	5/18/2024	Food Truck-a-Palooza
	5/25/2024	Quinceañera
	5/31/2024	Riders Club Every Monday & Wednesday evening – Pound Classes

FESTIVAL GROUNDS REPORT

02-07-24

FOOD TRUCK EVENT

Hallie has done an excellent job getting the event off the ground. She has identified 25 possible vendors and established a list of potential sponsors. After a second mailing to the potential sponsors, in a couple weeks, she and I will knock on doors to try to close the deal for additional sponsors. She has a commitment already for a Gold level sponsor. The goal is to have enough sponsor commitment to pay for the event before it opens.

Hallie has good acumen for events. She has a good feel for the variables and nuances that events present to producers and is flexible in her planning.

VOLUNTEER GROUPS

We are lucky here in Merrill. We are especially blessed with great volunteer groups that help us out. A few years ago, we started using volunteer groups to do set-up, take down and post event cleaning for several events. The group provides people such as students, parents and teachers to accomplish those tasks for the events and the event producer pays the group an agreed amount for the service.

The funds go into the group's account to help support their activities and the promoter accomplishes his set-up and move-out efficiently and with confidence that it is done right. Without these groups, events may encounter cost and expense that would be prohibitive. Most of the events at the Expo grounds exist on very slim margins so receiving this service helps the events stay viable.

The High School Trap and Skeet Club, the High School Band Boosters and the Merrill Riders Club have done an excellent job for us. Please thank them if you have occasion to do so.

FLEA MARKET(S)

Jodie Malsack and her husband sold all spaces out for their first show. Although Jodie had to deal with a last minute family health issue, she and her husband did a great job as a first time event. In speaking with vendors, they seemed happy with the results of the inaugural show and they are planning a second show.

AUCTION(S)

The shows have had almost 200 attendees and produced a high level of sales and the last 2 have been close to 250. Lange Auctions has spoken with an additional 6 estates and will be producing more events in the future.

QUAD RACING

Event on July 29. Tim English and his family have done an excellent job. With its success, other groups have been spoken to and are thinking about doing competitions also. We will help Tim make some adjustments in dirt and jumps that will reduce gravel. We will also help them become aware of Tourism grants from the Chamber.

WRESTLING

The last wrestling show was well received by the audience. The promoter was hoping for 200+ people but the crowd was closer to 150. Ryan Schwartzman has helped the event raise significant sponsor dollars which has kept the show "in the black".

GUN SHOW(S)

The producer was more than happy with the last show. All booth space has been sold out with a waiting list. I talking with many vendors, they are very happy that the show moved to Merrill from Wausau. The next show is the weekend prior to the committee meeting so an update will be made then.

MOUNTED SHOOTING

The event was happy and successful. It should be an annual event now and we will try to help them with possible grants from Tourism. They formed a working relationship with the Merrill Rider's Club which should help both organizations.

QUINCINEROS/WEDDINGS

Almost half of the facility walk-throughs are now for Quincineros events. Word has spread through the Hispanic community that our facilities are excellent and welcoming. Weddings continue to be a mainstay and universally are happy with the facilities. We have done many showings and walk throughs on the weekends and in the evening. Brides like to bring back their wedding party, family and DJ's to help finalize their plans.

We are looking at content and facilities for potential camping and will help the city department reviews as needed.