



CITY OF MERRILL
FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
AGENDA • THURSDAY JULY 1, 2021

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

6:00 PM

- I. To attend remotely, call 513-480-5058 and PIN 716 545 248 #.
- II. Call to Order
- III. Agenda Items for Consideration:
 1. Lighting
 2. Rodeo Update
 3. Fair Update
 4. Calendar of Events
- IV. Monthly Reports:
 1. Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund
 2. Permanent Vendor Rep. Caylor
- V. Public Comment Period
- VI. Establish date, time and location of next meeting
- VII. Adjournment

July

Lighting

Rodeo Update

Fair Update

Calendar of Events

(Attachment)

Festival Grounds Manager Report – Bjorklund

(Attachment)

Food Vendor Report – Caylor

(Attachment)

Attachment: Agenda Items (7074 : Lighting)

UP COMING EVENTS AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

2021

July	07/01/21	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	07/09/21	Rider's Club (grounds)**
	07/23/21	Rider's Club (grounds)**
	07/8,15,22,29/21	Vaccine Clinics
August	08/05/21	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	08/11-15/21	Fair
	08/19-20/21	WI Christmas Tree Producers Convention – Expo & Steckling
	08/20/21	Rider's Club (grounds)**
	08/24/21	Community Night Out**
	08/27/21	Rider's Club (grounds)**
September	09/02/21	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	09/10/21	Rider's Club (grounds)** - Rain Date
	09/17-18/21	Gun Show
	09/18/21	Pork in the Park (grounds)**

**** Yearly Repeat Events ****

Merrill Festival Grounds

July 1, 2021

Meetings and Discussions with:

Discussions with Wrestling promoter (who had by-pass surgery) about success of last event and prospects for future events.

Discussions with Gun show over set-up, move-out and show conduct; also use of Aqua Jays for set-up and clean-up.

Tammy M about Christine Vorpapel contact. Called twice; no answer.

Presentation given to Lion's club about tractor pull move to County Fair.

Tom Hayden regarding City procedures, agreement issues, scheduling restrictions, etc.

Dave Johnson regarding County health use of Expo; open and close Expo for events.

Krista Mitchell regarding event potentials; show Expo to potential renters, 3 potential wedding receptions

Paul Russell County Fair; County Fair Committee members about Fair schedule and opening; Fair committee about schedule; Community persons about county fair, Statewide fair managers; Tom Hayden about County Fair.

Dan Barbacovi about Fair schedule (x5), layout issues; alternative dates and WI Fairs.

June 2021

Permanent Stands Meeting

Eagle's Club, Merrill, WI

Chair Michael Caylor called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Present:

St. John's: Becky Jean Meyer

Eages: Mark Gano, Jay Schlueter, Jerry Leopold, Steve Sabatke

VFW: Corey Dornbrack

Lions: Jack Kasper, Ken Adams

Knights: Bill Hanson

Optimist Club: Joe Vonhirsch, Sarah Sturm

St. Francis: Mike Caylor

Agenda:

The Fair Board requested we hold this meeting as they wished to discuss several subjects with us. Chair Caylor was notified late Wednesday afternoon that no one was able to attend from the fair board. Soda prices were provided and would be covered in the agenda. The FB did ask that anyone with questions to circulate them back to the board for answers:

1. Beef Prices – County Market is going to have to raise prices on our fresh burgers for the first time since 2003. Merrill Distributing is offering both fresh and frozen products to the stands as well, they too are reporting prices have still not fully stabilized since the pandemic.
2. Buns: County Market bakery is reporting plans to have the same prices as 2019. Every stand seems to have their own bakery product supplier and it is hoped they too have continued stable pricing.
3. Cheese: Cheese seems to have returned to their previous prices.
4. Potatoes: Frozen products have increased on average up to 20% since 2019. Caylor found a new distributor of potatoes from Antigo if others wanted to return to the fresh cut product. Supplier name and prices were discussed.
5. We discussed food boats, currently Sam's Club has a hearty supply on hand per Jack Kasper who was on a recon mission recently. In past years Sam's stopped stocking them in house but made them available for ordering online. Becky Meyer suggested we all start stocking up now on boats just in case the Sam's stock vanishes as the summer goes on.
6. Graphic Packaging in Wausau has agreed to once again give us a free supply of spoiled food boat trays to whatever stands may want them. Caylor plans on picking up the first stash this Friday

and was promised a minimum of 2,000 trays. The company said they would try and arrange for some more and keep us on the nice list for the year. Currently the Knights, St. John's, St. Francis and the Lions are able to utilize these free items at great savings.

7. Oil by far will be the largest price increase for 2021 with the price nearly doubling since the 2019 fair. Currently Merrill Distributing is seeing \$50 per 35 gallon tub of oil with very little fluctuation in prices week to week. This by far will be the largest price increase to us in 2021 from the looks of it.
8. It was discussed, and agreed an increase will be needed in 2021 to cover the price increase from beef and the oil. Caylor pointed out that ribeye steaks have gone from \$10 per pound to \$17 per pound in one year. This increase is not meant to take advantage of the current economy, everything we touch is increasing or increased in price and we have to cover that loss.
9. The Fair Board has advised the price of soda for 2021. A suggested retail price was received from the fair board and the vendor group will submit back their requested retail price. A slight increase in soda will be felt at this year's fair but it seems we will be much less than other venues who are charging \$3 or more for a bottle.
10. Discussion was held on the America Recovery Act money provided to the city. An alderman has advised the permanent stands they should submit an application to the city in order to make up for lost revenue from 2020 both at the fair but also Labor Day. Alderman and Eagles member Steve Sabatke was present, he said he is getting conflicting opinions from the city regarding who and what is eligible for funds. He encouraged every group to submit request for funds based off losses from 2020 and to see what happens. Everyone present seemed to agree if we were awarded funds they would go for our groups and would not be turned over to a third party entity such as the fair board. Sabatke advised everyone if they intend on submitting applications to "do it quick." In order to submit a grant you need to show documentation such as revenue for 2019 compared to your zero in 2020. The grant application is online on the city web page under announcements.
11. The Eagle's Club and Mark Gano discussed the new entertainment coming to the beer garden with Nashville recording artist Bobby Darren appearing on the Friday night of the fair. They will place a stage in the far north end of the stands near the pavement in order to allow the most people to be able to gather on the sides. They encouraged St. Francis/St. John's to put tables in the back of their stands that night to increase foot traffic. The concert is a joint effort from the VFW and Eagles Club, they are accepting community donations to help pay for it and got a good deal on a tent from AC and Son's Tent Rental from Wausau on a tent. If this goes well they hope to continue to expand their entertainment with family oriented music.
12. Most everyone present agreed their stands need cosmetic improvements, some much quicker than others. The Knights are in a flux on if they are going to run their stand this year or rent it to another non-profit instead. The Knights were highly encouraged to make sure their stand remains open no matter the non-profit as we do not want to see it get removed by the city.

The group discussed a proposal that came from the city meeting of having a drive through stop and eat fair food event this summer, possibly in July. Some stands seemed interested while others did not. The Lion's noted they plan on devoting much of their volunteer efforts on visual improvements to their stand as did St. Johns. The Optimist Club spoke of their free cheese curd event from May and noted they need to make some adjustments with their kitchen before their next event. The group all agreed that if

the Optimists wanted to share free cheese curds with us we would have our July meeting down there. A discussion was held on the disappointment in the lack of use of the grounds for yet another year with again having only two events down there in which we were allowed to open, and three events in total. Steve Sabatke said he felt confident the city is moving in the right direction when it comes to marketing and hopes to see expanded events on the grounds themselves.

In general everyone seemed very optimistic for this year's fair. It is well known that the rodeo was a full house every night but Friday which was lower due to threatening weather. Jay Schlueter worked for the Eagles in the beer stand and said it was the hardest he has worked in 20 years. We are praying for good weather and hoping to get the volunteers lined up to keep our stands ready to go. It was also noted with the tractor pull moving to the Saturday of the fair this will lead to a full day of foot traffic for all stands and will likely lead to one of our biggest days down there.

It was asked if anyone had any concerns to bring back to the fair board for future discussion but no one had anything immediate. It had been previously asked what was going to be done for garbage removal this year.

Next Meeting: Call of the chair (who is holding out for the Optimists cheese curds)

Adjourn: 7:08 PM.