



CITY OF MERRILL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES • TUESDAY JUNE 8, 2021

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:00 PM

I. Call to Order

Mayor Woellner called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Paul Russell	Aldersperson - First District	Present	
Steve Hass	Aldersperson - Second District	Present	
Rick Blake	Aldersperson - Third District	Present	
Steve Osness	Aldersperson - Fourth District	Present	
John M. Van Lieshout	Aldersperson - Fifth District	Present	
Mike Rick	Aldersperson - Sixth District	Present	
Mark Weix	Aldersperson - Seventh District	Present	
Steve Sabatke	Aldersperson - Eighth District	Present	
Derek Woellner	Mayor	Present	

Other attendees (either in-person or remotely) included: Public Works Director/City Engineer Rod Akey, Police Chief Corey Bennett, I/T Manager Dustin Brown, Transit Director Brad Brummond, City Attorney Tom Hayden, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Utility Operations Manager Gabe Steinagel, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, Library Director Jessica Zellers, Ed Kemery (Merrill Community Theater), Erik Granum (Trilogy Consulting LLC), Mike Ravn, Al Wix and City Clerk Bill Heideman. Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

None.

IV. Agenda Items:

1. Presentation on Water Rate Study and consideration of potential rate structuring alternatives.

Information was in the meeting packet.

Representing Trilogy Consulting, Erik Granum distributed information and then gave a Water Rate Case Update presentation. The presentation included the following:

1. Overall Increase Required
2. Projected Cash Flow
3. Preliminary Rate Alternatives (3)
4. Rate Alternatives Comparison
5. Statewide Comparison
6. Next Steps

The three rate alternatives were discussed. The alternatives are:

1. Alternative #1: Mirrors the current rate structure, with three rate blocks for increasing quarterly usage.
2. Alternative #2: Eliminates the rate blocks entirely, with all usage charged at one uniform rate.
3. Alternative #3: Hybrid approach that combines the first two rate blocks, but maintains a lower rate for high usage customers.

Motion (Hass/Blake) to recommend Alternative #3 and refer this recommendation to the Public Service Commission (PSC) for their consideration.

RESULT:	APPROVED
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2. Distribute additional information and any recently received applications for American Rescue Fund (City of Merrill) grant program.

City Administrator Johnson provided additional verbal information the request from the Merrill Community Theater (\$8,000) to purchase a stage.

Ed Kemery of the Merrill Community Theater was in attendance. Without objection, he was granted floor privileges. He provided verbal information on the request and answered questions. The agent for the Merrill Community Theater is a City resident. To date, the Merrill Community Theater has presented one play.

Mayor Woeller stated that, after the reviewing the applications, he liked the applications from the Merrill Community Theater and the Sawmill Brewing Company (Race to the Taps).

Motion (Blake/Woellner) to approve the request from the Merrill Community Theater for \$8,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act Funding grant program, to be used to purchase a portable stage.

Motion (Sabatke) to amend the motion by adding a clause that the stage would become the property of the City. Motion to amend failed due to lack of a second.

On roll call vote, motion to approve the request carried 5-4. Voting No - Alderman Hass, Alderman Osness, Alderman Rick and Alderman Sabatke.

It was decided that more information was needed before making a decision on the Sawmill Brewing Company (Race to the Taps) application. City Administrator Johnson was directed to obtain this information.

Motion (Hass/Osness) to deny the request (\$15,000) from the Haunted Sawmill. Motion to deny the request carried 8-1 on roll call vote. Voting No - Mayor Woellner.

V. Adjournment

Motion (Russell/Rick) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:58 P.M.