

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

June 7, 2023

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 4:15 p.m., at Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Kyle Gulke, Chad Krueger, Dan Novitch, Rebecca Rutkowski, Jean Ravn, and Joan Tabor

Members Excused Absent: Mark Weix

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Rutkowski to approve the minutes from the May meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Tabor, seconded by Ravn, to approve the claims from May 2023.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: none

The next item on the agenda was to discuss the issue of unleashed dogs and removal of pet waste in all parks. Wendorf stated that this is becoming a pretty big issue in the parks with people not leashing their dogs or picking up waste. Wendorf stated that we do have doggy ports for people that offer bags and a waste disposal. There was a discussion on having different language put in for City Ordinances. Wendorf will talk with Attorney Hayden about new language. This item will be brought back to the next meeting.

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion and update on connector bridge from Prairie Dells County Park to the City Forest. Wendorf stated that there was a couple different locations picked out. The County will be bringing in an engineer to pick out the best location for the bridge. Wendorf will keep the commission updated.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss potentially adjusting cancellation fees for Park Shelter Reservations. Wendorf stated that this is something he would like the commission to consider before budget time. Wendorf stated there has been more cancellations now with online reservations. Wendorf stated that there has to be some changes in our cancellation policy due to people just making reservations and canceling them a month later. We end up losing money because if no one else rents the park than we have an open park. Wendorf handed out a sheet with some other community policies on it for new cancellation fees. This item will be brought back on a future agenda.

The next item on the agenda is an update on the Bierman Family Aquatic Center. Wendorf stated that all the leaks were fixed and the construction joints were finished up. Hoping that Badger Pool can do start up and cross fingers that everything goes good.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had questions. Gulke questioned how the trail building was going on the new land purchased. Wendorf stated everything is going good. Chris Schotz is working on the trails again and doing a good job.

Wendorf stated Summer Playground is going good, leagues are in full swing and programs will be starting soon.

Rutkowski questioned if the County gave money through ARPA to the make a campground inside the City limits. Wendorf stated that he did have a conversation with a County Board member and shared a few ideas and will refer to Engineer Akey and the Park and Recreation Commission does not have anything to do with that unless it is located within a park, and that would be more of a question for the Council.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 2, 2023 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Public Comment: Hallie Savell, N2934 Hwy 107. Hallie was concerned that all parks did not have doggy waste removal ports and was wondering if more could be purchased. Hallie stated that Ott's Park did not have one and there is a lot of waste and unleashed dogs. Hallie also stated Riverside does not have one and it would be nice for both parks to have them.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Rutkowski to adjourn at 5:00 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary