

**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
**WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2022 - MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**5:15 p.m.**

Members Present: Mayor Steve Hass and Alderpersons Steve Sabatke and Dick Lupton. Alderperson Mike Rick attended remotely.

Members Absent/Excused: Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel

Others Present: Alderpersons Rick Blake, and Mark Weix, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Public Works Director/City Engineer Rod Akey, Utility Superintendent Gabe Steinagel, Street Superintendent Dustin Bonack, Finance Director Kathy Unertl (remote), City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Clerk Lori Anderson-Malm, Street & Weed Commissioner Ron Liberty, Kristine Vorpagel (remote) and Merrill Productions video operator

- 1. Mayor Hass called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.**
- 2. Consider approval of meeting minutes from April 27, 2022 – Motion** (Sabatke/Lupton) to approve. Carried.
- 3. Water & Sewer Agenda Items:**
  1. Water and Sewer Vouchers – Motion to approve (Lupton/Sabatke). Carried.
  2. Water and Sewer Operations Report – Utility Superintendent Steinagle stated the water and electric has been installed at the camp grounds at the Festival Grounds. River crossings have been checked for leaks and everything is good. Well #4 work has been completed and will be put back online when 2 safe water samples are received. Sludge has been started to be spread on fields and fire hydrants were flushed the previous week. His report was in the agenda packet.  
  
Motion to put the Water and Sewer Operations Report on file. Carried.
- 4. Board of Public Works Agenda Items:**
  1. Board of Public Works Vouchers – Motion (Lupton/Sabatke) to approve. Carried.

## 5. Other agenda items for consideration:

1. Resolution approving the 2021 Compliance Maintenance Annual Report for the City of Merrill Wastewater Treatment Plant

Motion to forward the annual report to council was made by Alderperson Lupton. Seconded by Alderperson Sabatke. Carried.

2. Discussion on Facilities Review at the Wastewater Treatment Plant – Utility Superintendent Steinagel met with Strand regarding a facilities review. The last time this was done was in the 1980's. The last major update at the plant was done in 1991. Permit renewal in 2024; will apply next summer and then will know the limits for phosphorous, ammonia, etc. The estimated cost for the review is \$80,000 - \$100,000. Then we will have 4 years to finish the step-by-step requirements to meet the DNR standards. City Engineer Akey stated our current phosphorous level is .7; the limit is 1. The new DNR standards are .3 which will require an upgrade to our process. These upgrades will be required to get the new permit number and will be in the 2023 budget. They just wanted everyone to be aware of these numbers.

Alderperson Sabatke asked why the long time between reviews. Utility Superintendent Steinagel said the reason is because the limits haven't been changed since the 1990's.

What is pushing this review, according to City Engineer Akey, is from upper Wisconsin and TMDL which is the total maximum daily load for phosphorous.

Alderperson Sabatke asked if the \$80,000 - \$100,000 is what to expect. City Engineer Akey said it could be \$8 - \$10 million for a plant upgrade. The timeline is 5-10 years and there is funding available.

3. Consider a Natural Lawn Permit - Street Superintendent Bonack explained this permit follows the city ordinance. This is our existing natural lawn application and does require buffer zones that need to be maintained. The permit fee is \$25.00.
4. Discuss and possibly consider acceptable minimum bid for vacant city lots – City Administrator Johnson stated this came from the last COW in May. The current minimum is \$250.

After discussion, a motion was made to increase the minimum bid to \$500. If the minimum bid needs to be adjusted, it would come back to the Board of

Public Works. Alderperson Sabatke made the motion. Alderperson Lupton seconded. Motion carried. This will be referred to the Common Council.

**6. Monthly Reports included in the agenda packet;**

1. Building Inspector Pagel - excused
2. Public Works/City Engineer Akey
3. Street Superintendent Bonack
4. Street & Weed Commissioner Liberty

**7. Next Meeting – Wednesday, June 29th at 5:15 p.m.**

**8. Public Comment Period – None**

**9. Adjournment - Motion (Sabatke/Lupton) to adjourn at 5:48 p.m. Carried.**

Prepared by: Lori L Anderson-Malm - City Clerk