



CITY OF MERRILL
COMMON COUNCIL
MINUTES • WEDNESDAY MAY 13, 2020

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Woellner called the meeting to order at 6:00 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	Alderman - Eighth District	Present	
Derek Woellner	Mayor	Present	

2. Silent Prayer

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Roll Call

5. Public Comment Period

Steve Sabatke spoke on “closing” and “reopening” as they relate to the COVID-19 pandemic. He cited an informal Facebook poll he conducted recently, in which 73% of the responders favored reopening with no exceptions. He urged the Common Council to take the necessary steps to reopen so that events can be scheduled.

6. Minutes of previous Common Council meeting(s):

1. Minutes of April 14, 2020 meeting and April 21, 2020 meeting

Alderman Osness suggested that the Committee of the Whole meet soon to discuss the Mayor's Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency for the City. That proclamation was approved by the Common Council on April 14th and is due to expire on May 19th.

Motion (Rick/Van Lieshout) to approve the minutes.

RESULT: APPROVED

7. Revenue & Expense Reports(s):

1. Revenue and Expense for the period ending April 30, 2020

Motion (Osness/Blake) to approve.

RESULT: APPROVED

8. Committee of the Whole:

1. The Committee of the Whole recommends deferring the following 2020 capital items: Dock-Riverside (\$15,000), Streets Garage Parking Lot (\$100,000), Concrete - Sidewalk (\$75,000), Black Dirt Screening (\$12,500), Poplar & Court Streets project (\$150,000), Mill St. (East Main Street to East First Street) project (\$60,000) and West St. Paul Street (curb, gutter & paving) project (\$150,000).

Motion (Hass/Osness) to defer all the projects listed in the Committee of the Whole recommendation, with the exception of the Black Dirt Screening (\$12,500).

RESULT: APPROVED

2. The Committee of the Whole recommends removing \$40,000 from Festival Grounds Cattle Barn repair/renovation fund.

Motion (Hass/Rick) to approve.

RESULT: APPROVED

3. Consider budget amendment to approve \$70,000 for street lighting for the M2020-01 Grand Ave. project. At the April 14th Common Council meeting, this item was referred to the Committee of the Whole. At a meeting on April 22nd, the Committee of the Whole recommended approval.

Motion (Russell/Van Lieshout) to approve.

RESULT: APPROVED

9. Personnel and Finance Committee:

1. The Personnel and Finance Committee has directed City Administrator Johnson, Community Development Program Coordinator Shari Wicke and City staff to prepare revisions to the Small Business Emergency Support Program policy and submit those revisions to the May Common Council meeting.

City Administrator Johnson reported that, after discussion with City staff, no changes were made to the program policies.

No action was necessary, requested or taken.

2. The Personnel and Finance Committee recommends implementing a hiring freeze for all hires, and to review the freeze at the November, 2020 Personnel and Finance Committee meeting. The Police Department, Fire Department and the T. B. Scott Free Library would be exempt from the hiring freeze.

Motion (Hass/Van Lieshout) to approve.

RESULT: APPROVED

3. Consider furloughing of Festival Grounds Manager position, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Personnel and Finance Committee has directed City Attorney Hayden to research the legal ramifications of a furlough for a contracted position. City Attorney Hayden is to report his findings at the May Common Council meeting.

Motion (Hass/Russell) to refer to the Committee of the Whole.

RESULT: REFERRED TO COMM. OF THE WHOLE

4. Consider implementing policy that unused capital project funds be returned to the Debt Service Fund. The Personnel and Finance Committee recommends approval.

Motion (Rick/Sabatke) to approve.

RESULT: APPROVED

10. Placing Committee Reports on File:

1. Consider placing the following committee reports on file: Airport Commission, Committee of the Whole, Community Development Committee, Health & Safety Committee, Library Board, Parks & Recreation Commission, Personnel & Finance Committee, Redevelopment Authority and Tourism Commission.

Motion (Hass/Blake) to place on file.

RESULT: PLACED ON FILE

11. Ordinances:

1. An Ordinance amending Chapter 16, Section 16-1 Schedules of licenses and fees, Chapter 4 Alcohol Beverages for the license year of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 (Ordinance #2020-08).

City Attorney Hayden gave the ordinance a first reading by synopsis.

Motion (Hass/Russell) to suspend the rules and give the ordinance a second reading and a third reading by title only. Carried.

City Attorney Hayden give the ordinance a second reading and a third reading by title only.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Steve Hass, Alderperson - Second District
SECONDER:	Rick Blake, Alderperson - Third District
AYES:	Russell, Hass, Blake, Osness, Van Lieshout, Rick, Weix, Sabatke

2. An Ordinance amending Chapter 2, Article IV, Section 2-84 Meetings of the Common Council, related to allowable start time for Common Council meetings (Ordinance #2020-09).

City Attorney Hayden gave the ordinance a first reading by synopsis.

Motion (Russell/Van Lieshout) to suspend the rules and give the ordinance a second reading and a third reading by title only. Carried.

City Attorney Hayden give the ordinance a second reading and a third reading by title only.

RESULT:	APPROVED [7 TO 1]
MOVER:	Paul Russell, Alderperson - First District
SECONDER:	John M. Van Lieshout, Alderperson - Fifth District
AYES:	Russell, Blake, Osness, Van Lieshout, Rick, Weix, Sabatke
NAYS:	Hass

12. Resolutions:

None.

13. Mayor's Communications

Mayor Woellner thanked everyone who helped with the May 12th election. He also thanked Lincoln County District Attorney Galen Bayne-Allison for providing information earlier in the meeting.

Mayor Woellner also issued a reminder that, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is recommending that people wear protective masks in public.

14. Adjournment

Motion (Van Lieshout/Blake) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:35 P.M.