



CITY OF MERRILL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES • MONDAY MAY 10, 2021

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:15 PM

I. Call to Order

Mayor Woellner called the meeting to order at 5:15 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Paul Russell	Aldersperson - First District	Remote	
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: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Finance Director Kathy Unertl, City Attorney Tom Hayden, I/T Manager Dustin Brown, Public Works Director/City Engineer Rod Akey, Clyde Nelson, Cindi Christiansen and City Clerk Bill Heideman. Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

Clyde Nelson spoke in favor of funding for the fair. He stated that the fair has a positive impact on the entire community.

Cindi Christiansen also spoke in favor of funding for the fair. She stated that it is more than a fair, it is a community event.

IV. Agenda Items:

1. Discuss allocation of American Rescue Plan funds, including 2021 funding requests from Lincoln County Fair Association and Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo.

Information was in the meeting packet.

Finance Director Unertl explained that, by mid-June of 2021, the City will receive \$445,000 from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Federal Grant. The City will also receive the same amount in 2022, for a total of \$890,000.

Alderman Sabatke stated that he has a proposal to allocate the ARPA funds to several organizations. He would like to see money given back to the people.

It was noted that, on behalf of the Lincoln County Fair Association, Paul Russell has submitted a funding request for \$15,000. The original request from the fair association, which was in the meeting packet, was for \$5,000. A \$7,500 funding request from the Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo was also in the meeting packet.

Motion (Van Lieshout/Blake) to recommend allocating \$15,000 from the ARPA funds to the Lincoln County Fair Association, and allocating \$7,500 from the ARPA funds to the Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo. Motion carried 7-2 on roll call vote. Voting No - Alderman Hass and Alderman Osness.

These recommendations will be considered at the May 11th Common Council meeting.

Discussion was then held on who should determine how the remaining ARPA funds are allocated. Alderman Van Lieshout suggested that a fund request application form be developed, the application process be publicized, and that a deadline for application submission be established.

Alderman Sabatke raised the possibility of using funds for a Marketing Coordinator, Mural Painting or signage. These were funding suggestions given to him by local merchants.

It was decided that the Tourism Commission funding application form could be used, with some “tweaking” necessary before use as an ARPA fund request application.

Motion (Hass/Van Lieshout) to recommend allocating \$70,000 from the ARPA funds for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and supplies for various City departments. Motion carried 9-0 on roll call vote.

This recommendation will be considered at the May 11th Common Council meeting.

2. Consider Strand engineering proposal for East Side Water Tower

Information was in the meeting packet.

Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey noted that a new water tower has been considered for several years. He added that everyone who receives a water bill would benefit from a new tower.

Motion (Van Lieshout/Russell) to recommend allocating \$55,500 to Strand Associates Inc. (\$43,500 for design services for water tower and \$12,000 for Safe Drinking Water Loan Assistance) from the ARPA funds. Motion carried.

This recommendation will be considered at the May 11th Common Council meeting.

V. Adjournment

Motion (Hass/Van Lieshout) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:28 P.M.