



CITY OF MERRILL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES • WEDNESDAY MAY 5, 2021

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:15 PM

I. Call to Order

Mayor Woellner called the meeting to order at 5:17 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	Excused	
John M. Van Lieshout	Aldersperson - Fifth District	Excused	
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, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Darin Pagel, Transit Director Brad Brummond, Mike Ravn and City Clerk Bill Heideman. Marketing representatives from several local companies were in attendance and provided input. Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comment

None.

IV. Agenda Item:

1. Discussion on Marketing and Communications

A “standards” guide was distributed. Mayor Woellner led discussion on a review of the guide. He commented that it appears, at this time, Merrill has two identities. One is the “City of Parks” and the other is the “Gateway to the Northwoods”. Another document related to the City was also distributed and discussed.

It was noted that an ordinance creating a Marketing and Communications Committee is now being considered by the Common Council. The ordinance had a first reading at the April 13th, 2021 Common Council meeting and is due for a second reading at the May 11th, 2021 Common Council meeting.

The meeting attendees who attended in-person introduced themselves.

A representative from Church Mutual suggested that there is more work to be done before selected an identity.

A marketing representative remarked that, when their company is hiring, they sell the company first.

A representative from the Chamber of Commerce suggested that it could be beneficial to include a Chamber representative on the Marketing and Communications Committee.

The demographic target groups for marketing were then discussed. These groups included tourists, new residents and businesses.

Mike Ravn stated that the structure, budget, and other aspects of the committee should be considered next in the process. He said it is not fair to ask marketing professionals to provide information without giving them information on the current status of City marketing. He suggested that an “inventory” of the current status of marketing be compiled.

Alderman Sabatke suggested that it might be necessary to authorize someone to assess and assemble all the current City marketing efforts.

Mike Ravn remarked that, due to the availability of remote working, numerous people live in Merrill but work elsewhere.

A representative from Sierra Pacific suggested using Instagram as a way of sharing information with the public.

Mike Ravn suggested that it is imperative to have a structured committee created and formed before proceeding.

V. Adjournment

Motion (Rick/Hass) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:30 P.M.