



CITY OF MERRILL

Parks & Recreation Dept. - Smith Center

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APRIL MEETING NOTICE

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission will have a meeting on **Wednesday, April 7, 2021 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall**. Phone info: Phone: 352-608-0164
PIN: 940 431 215 #

Voting members of Commission: Jean Ravn, Brian Artac, Kyle Gulke, Joan Tabor, John Vanlieshout, Amanda Groth and Dan Novitch

The following items will be included on the agenda:

1. Approve minutes from previous meeting.
2. Approve claims.
3. Public Comment
4. Discuss and recommend River Bend Trail route through the MARC to connect with Council Grounds.
5. Monthly reports.
6. Set date for next meeting.
7. Public comment
8. Adjournment

Submitted by

Dan Novitch
Dan Novitch, Chairperson *dns*
Parks and Recreation Commission

The Merrill City Hall is accessible to the physical disadvantaged. If special accommodations are required, please contact City Hall at 536-5594.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

March 3, 2021

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 4:15 p.m., at Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Dan Novitch, Kyle Gulke, Jean Ravn, Brian Artac, Joan Tabor, and John Van Lieshout attended virtual at 4:30 p.m.

Members Excused Absent:

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Mark Weix and MP3

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Ravn to approve the minutes from the February meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Groth, seconded by Artac, to approve the claims from February.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

The next item on the agenda was to consider acceptance and placement of the T.B. Scott Mansion Tower. Wendorf stated that the commission has two big questions to answer, do they want it and where should it go. Wendorf stated that he was approached about putting the T.B. Scott Mansion tower in one of the parks. Wendorf stated that he would like to know what condition the tower is in, and who would be doing the repairs on the tower. Wendorf stated that he would want clarification that the City Council would give any additional funding if needed and would not come out of Park and Recreation funds. City Administrator stated that \$1,000.00 has been donated for interpretive panels and Park City Credit Union is also collection funds. The funds collected will need to pay for the purchase of the tower, to bring the tower down, transport the tower, restore and put a base under the tower. Wendorf stated that he would like the tower to be placed between the fishing pier and the overlook by the Agra Pavilion.

***Motion made by Tabor, seconded by Vanlieshout to accept the T.B. Scott Mansion Tower.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion made by Artac, seconded by Groth to place the T.B. Scott Mansion Tower down by the Riverbend Trail between the fishing pier and the overlook by the Agra Pavilion.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss Voyageur Heritage Waterways concept. Bill Bertram from Iron Bull in Wausau gave a presentation on all the benefits of water trails. He stated that water trails bring people into a community. Canoeing and kayaking are growing in popularity. If water trails are marked people will utilize them. He stated that they have a person who writes all the grants, and all the paperwork but would need some letters of endorsement. We just need to

put up markers on the water trails. Landings that would be utilized will be Riverside, Ott's and the portage to the Dam.

***Motion made by Gulke, seconded by Ravn to approve the Voyageur Heritage Waterways concept.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review and potentially approve memorial idea for the late Charlie Phelps. Wendorf stated that Charlie Phelps was a driving force behind the Smith Center and the MARC. Wendorf stated that he has talked with Phelps family and also with the Smith family in regards to naming the ice arena area "Charlie Phelps Memorial Ice Rink". The building would not be renamed, just the ice area. Wendorf stated they will have some signs made that would be put up around the building and a dedication.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Artac to rename the ice arena area the "Charlie Phelps Memorial Ice Rink".

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss the connector trail from River Bend Trail to Prairie Trails. Wendorf stated that he has been working on a bike trail map (trail concept drawing in board packet) and will be working with Kate Drewek on confirmation that all streets marked are city right of ways. Wendorf stated that there was funding set aside to pay for trail markers. Wendorf will follow up at future meetings with more information.

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion on Forestry Ordinance revisions. Wendorf included some proposed changes in the Forestry Ordinances and will continue to make changes until completed. Wendorf will have all changes made by September. Wendorf will continue to update the commission as proposed changes are made to the Forestry Ordinance.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Novitch questioned about the new CivicRec program that the Park and Recreation Department will be utilizing. Wendorf stated that it will be nice to be able to have people register for programs and rent parks and ball fields online. Wendorf stated that he has received 42 applications for the full time position and enough applications to open the aquatic center and all of our summer programs.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 7 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Public Comment: Christine Vorpapel stated that commission members should say last names so that the people listening in know who is making the motions.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Artac to adjourn at 5:40 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary

MARCH

MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	CLEANING SUPPLIES	2/24/2021	203701	\$29.97	55400-03-50000
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL INVOICE	2/28/2021	7655204	\$60.39	55200-02-15000
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL INVOICE	2/28/2021	7655682	\$67.09	55300-03-41500
ATCO INTERNATIONAL	CENTURION	3/5/2021	10573385	\$266.00	55200-03-40000
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING	3/1/2021		\$148.00	55400-02-23600
BEACON ATHLETICS	FIELD CHALK	3/15/2021	5263999	\$904.40	55200-08-91000
BLUEJAY 96.3	ADVERTISEMENT	2/28/2021	12641-12	\$249.00	55400-03-41000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS	2/25/2021	4076913425	\$71.18	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS	3/4/2021	4077579468	\$71.19	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	MOP/MATS	3/11/2021	4078251917	\$189.90	55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM AND JOE	3/11/2021	4078252029	\$71.18	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS	3/10/2021	4078926213	\$71.19	55200-03-46000
FOTO NEWS	BLACK SQUIRRELL	3/1/2021		\$233.00	BLACK SQUIRREL
FOTO NEWS	ADVERTISEMENT ANTIGO MINI BOOK	3/1/2021		\$310.00	55400-03-41000
FOTO NEWS	ADVERTISEMENT PARK MAINTENANCE	3/1/2021		\$250.00	55400-03-41000
ISA	WISCONSIN CHAPTER DUES	3/4/2021	1051307	\$45.00	55200-03-320000
JO ELLEN JAMES	SECURITY DEPOSIT AGRA	3-17-21	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
JUMLINE	BARLEYFEST WEBSITE	3/9/2021	124486	\$35.00	BARLEYFEST
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-9	2/2/2021	17830	\$141.66	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-2	2/3/2021	17833	\$117.60	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-18	2/17/2021	17849	\$641.41	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-11	2/2/2021	17831	\$141.86	55200-03-50000
MERRILL WATER UTILITY	MARC	4/10/2021	106-00940-00	\$768.06	55400-02-21000
NAPA AUTO PARTS	EYE BOLT	2/22/2021	884586	\$43.58	55200-03-50000
NASSCO	HARD ROLL PAPER TOWEL	3/15/2021	32732318	\$400.50	55200-03-40000
NELSON'S POWER HOUSE	LOOP CHAIN	2/18/2021	322057	\$50.99	55200-03-40000
PERMAR SECURITY	SERVICE CALL	3/15/2021	1203870500	\$70.56	55400-02-16500
PREMIER	BLACK BRASS BENCH PLATES	10/27/2020	1305A	\$46.00	
R & R SPECIALITIES	EDGAR BLADES	3/8/2021	72382	\$299.65	55400-03-51500
REINDERS	FIELD AGGREGATE/TOPDRESS	3/19/2021	2420754	\$959.20	55200-08-91000
RICHMOND AUTO UPHOLSTERY	REPLACEMENT SEAT FOAM CUSHION	3/8/2021	43524	\$418.00	55200-03-50000
RIVERS EDGE LP	FORK LIFT	3/13/2021		\$56.00	55400-03-51500

SERVICE MOTOR COMPANY	2 TURN MOWERS	3/1/2021		\$16,000.00	CAPITAL 2021
SERVICE MOTOR COMPANY	REPLACEMENT DECK & ACCESSORIES	3/1/2021		\$1,210.00	CITY FOREST TIMBER SALE REV.
VIP OFFICE PRODUCTS	CALCULATOR PAPER	3/2/2021	0109918-001	\$4.58	55400-03-10000
WALMART	EASTER EGG HUNT	3/3/2021	1.062E+11	\$28.89	55300-03-41500
WALMART	EASTER EGG HUNT	3/8/2021	1.067E+11	\$125.37	55300-03-41500
WALMART	OFFICE SUPPLIES/EASTER EGG HUNT	2/23/2021		\$42.51	55300-03-41500
WEINBRENNER SHOE	BOOTS JIM YATES	3/3/2021	210071191	\$70.00	55200-03-46500
WEINBRENNER SHOE	BOOTS JOE WECKWERTH	3/3/2021	210071190	\$55.00	55200-03-46500
WISCONSIN URBAN WOOD	MEMBERSHIP	3/24/2021		\$100.00	55200-08-92000



River Bend Trail Potential Route Descriptions through the MARC

Thanks to the River District Development Foundation and City of Merrill, we are finally able to talk about some finishing touches on the original goal of the trail – connecting the east end of the City to the west. That final piece is how we want the trail to flow through the Merrill Area Recreation Complex. We have had a few internal discussions at our River Bend Construction Committee (Consisting of RDDF members and City leaders) meetings over the past few months and there is a difference of opinions as to how the route through the MARC should look. You will see on your map there is a route delineated in RED and a route delineated in BLUE. This narrative is to help explain the reasoning behind each and list a few pros and cons associated with each, and to hopefully help you with your decision.

RED ROUTE: This route, as you can see, follows Marc Drive all the way south to and through the far parking lot straight to the trail that links directly up with Council Grounds. This is the most direct route and is paved 80% of the way to its destination. By staying on Marc Drive, it allows us to use existing street signs to add River Bend Trail signage to without adding additional posts into the park to mow and maintain around. It is the most direct route to and from Council Grounds and from my observation, is the route that is already being used a majority of the time. Another benefit is that where the route links with the granite trail that leads directly to Council Grounds are restrooms, water fountains, playground, and shelter areas that could serve as a natural trail head. Observing people's behaviors and patterns is always the best way to figure out how to plan, in my opinion. If in the future we decide to pave the linkage trail from the southwest corner of the parking lot towards council grounds, it would cost a very small fraction of the cost of paving the entire BLUE trail option. This route is plowed all the way to the gravel connection between the ballfields year round so it has more function for every season. A few cons associated with the RED ROUTE are the fact that pedestrians do have to share Marc Drive with vehicular traffic. There are times where Marc Drive can be busy (athletic events, aquatic center, most of these are seasonal). People still have the ability to utilize the BLUE option whenever they choose, as it is a granite pedestrian trail.

BLUE ROUTE: This route follows the western exterior granite pedestrian trail that has been in existence on the property since the MARC was developed. This route is nice because it is segregated from vehicular traffic and only has to be shared with other pedestrian walkers/hikers/joggers/dog walkers. It is a quieter route with less congestion while there are events in other areas on the grounds. It is not a direct route and is a longer distance than the RED route. It would also require additional wayfinding signage along the path (these would

need to be installed into the grass areas along the trail as they don't currently exist). With additional signage along this path, it adds maintenance to our staff with additional weed trimming. The granite trail is not plowed in the winter months and can be a bit spongy at times until frost comes out in the spring. This route would require you to double back to get to the restroom/water/shelter area located in the southwest corner of the parking lot. If paving were in the plans for the BLUE route, the cost to pave that much trail would be a significant amount more than the RED option.

Summary: In summary, it is a tremendous testament to the River District Development Foundation and all of their volunteers who have spent countless hours over the past decade plus drive the progress on this amazing community asset. It is exciting to be talking about how we finish the final connection within our community and we have two good options inside the MARC. As you can see, both routes have strengths and weaknesses. You cannot go wrong with either route it comes down to which one makes the most sense functionally for its users and our department which is ultimately responsible for the maintenance of the trail once it is finished.

Respectfully Submitted,

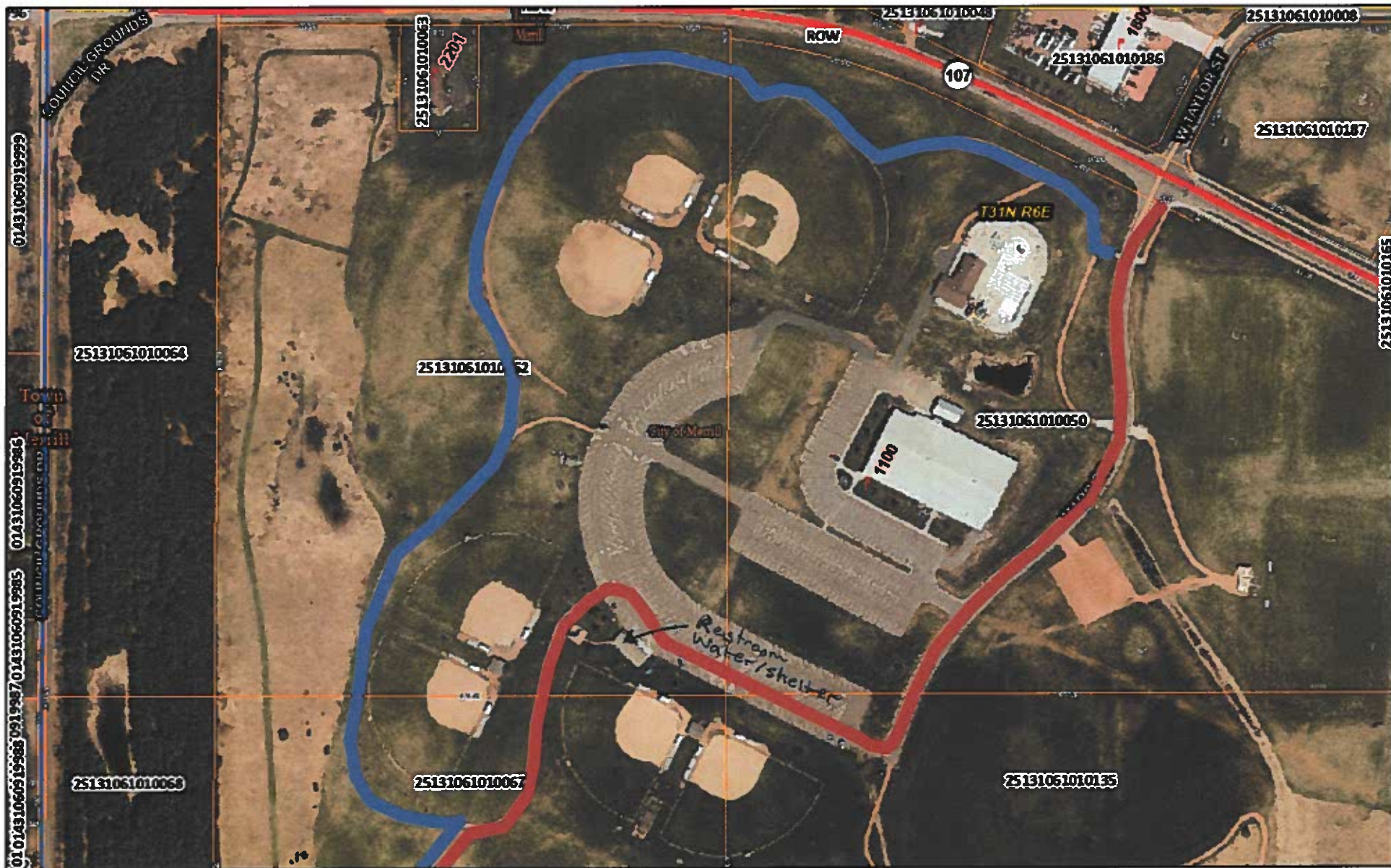
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Wendorf', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dan Wendorf
Parks & Recreation Director
City of Merrill

Route option A

City of Merrill

Route option B



3/23/2021, 11:14:43 AM

 **City Limit**

☐ **PLSS Township**

Public Roads LG Scale Address Points

 Tax Parcel Boundary **Municipal Boundaries**

 State Highway

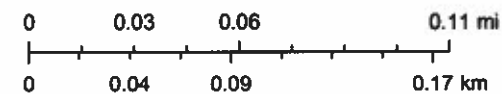
SITE WITH BLDG

PLSS Section

Town and City

Parcel PINs

1:4,514



City of Merrill, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS.

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI



April 2021 Parks & Recreation Director's Report

Parks: The snow is finally almost gone! We are caught up on fixing picnic tables and have been spending a lot of time cleaning up in the parks as the snow recedes. I know that I say this every year, but it is amazing how people can throw so much trash in our beautiful parks with no regard. You would be astonished to see the amount of garbage that we pull out of our parks. Very soon we will be un-winterizing all of our park restrooms and other facilities to be ready for spring sports and park shelter reservations. Our park shelter reservation numbers have rebounded nicely from earlier in the year and hopefully our COVID numbers (and recommendations) continue in a positive trend to allow for more normalcy. MHS is moving forward with spring sports so we will have our fields ready for them when they are needed. It is a different year for spring sports with the "alternate" fall sports communities having flip flopped seasons. Normal spring sports are not starting when they usually do and are approximately a month later than in previous years. It doesn't affect us; in fact it is easier on our crew to allow more time for the fields to set up before we are hosting competitions. Boys and girl's baseball and softball leagues and tournaments are planned to take place again this year and that is great to see. It will be great to see people using our fields again this year and to get children and their families active and engaged once again. The application deadline for our Parks Maintenance position has come and gone and we were fortunate to have 42 applications to choose from. After continuous internal discussions, we narrowed our candidates down to 4. We are currently in the process of doing our homework on each of them in advance of scheduling interviews early in April. If we find the perfect candidate, we will offer the position to them, hopefully, by the end of April or early May at the very latest. This person cannot begin until after June 1st according to our budget, so we want to make sure that we have enough time to make the best decision for our department. As it is anytime you hire, there can be only one person and there will be people who disagree with it. We are looking for the best overall fit for our department and will not compromise at all on that. I added this in my report because I wanted to make sure we are crystal clear that it may not simply be the most skilled or experienced person. We are looking for the best overall fit. We will be starting on our Kitchenette water lateral capital project the week of April 5th, if weather cooperates and should have it finished by the end of the week or early the week after. This is great because it will be finished and operational by the time we open the park up for reservations. I have been working on all of our other capital projects and equipment in hopes of lining things up for the year to get them done without any issues. The TB Scott Tower has been successfully lowered from the mansion before it was demolished and is currently sitting on the parking lot by the mansion foundation. Ascension has generously agreed to fund the restoration of the tower and Park City Credit Union has generously agreed to fund the landscaping portion of the project to allow it to be finished. There are a lot of questions that need to be answered yet regarding the tower so hopefully I can have something for you verbally by the time of our meeting. I did meet with City Engineer and Administrator at the site a few times to work on final spot for the tower and a layout that makes the most sense for the site and the structure.

Forestry: I have been doing tree inspections as much as I can in between things. We have had a few issues with the somewhat frequent heavier than usual winds over the past few weeks causing some down limbs. I will continue tree inspections to keep ahead of the Street Department and try to get as much done as we can before they are consumed with road construction projects. I talked with American Transmission Company (ATC) recently and they have graciously agreed to provide funding for our Arbor Day tree planting again this year so thank you to ATC. Last year everyone canceled their Arbor Day tree planting and observation and the National Arbor Day Foundation waived this requirement as part of being a Tree City USA last year only due to COVID. This year they haven't decided as to whether this will be a requirement or not but I would like to plan a planting and will let you know when that is right away.

Recreation: Thanks to Dawn, we are pretty much ready to roll out our 2021 Recreation Programs. Like everything else they are subject to change but as we have been sharing with you, we are very confident that we designed things to adapt to any and all situations/recommendations/guidelines that might come our way. We will be very vigilant with our communications this season to keep everyone informed. Like everything, there are a lot more questions than there are answers but hopefully through vaccines and declining cases, we will be able to get back closer to normal for our programs. It is just wonderful to be able to be talking about hosting them versus our conversations we had to have last year. We finally received enough applications for seasonal employment to run all of our programs the way we were hoping to this year, including the Aquatic Center. It was very slow going at first but it is great to see our seasonal spots filled up. Our first day for registrations will be at our Children's Festival on April 17th. We are also hosting our annual Easter Egg Hunt on April 3rd and will do it similar to the one we did last August. We will carefully spread eggs out in several different parks to reduce people's proximity to one another and have it be individual families hunting on their own. Once they find an egg, they can take it to Ott's Park to redeem their prize in a drive through style setting to try and keep everyone safe.

Smith Center: It is very hard to believe but another ice season has come and gone and we removed our ice starting on March 13th. The removal process went well again this year and we have been spending a lot of time cleaning everything up and getting ready for dry floor events. Like everything else, we are hoping that the trends of decreasing cases and less guidelines continue so we can return to as close to "normal" as possible with all of our events this year and moving forward. We have shown the building a few times to a few potential new event people and hopefully we are able to land some new things. As previously mentioned, we are hosting our Children's Festival in the Smith Center on 4/17 and have over 20 booths reserved for the event. The event will follow COVID recommendations and can be done as a "grab-and-go" style event with one directional flow using one entrance and one exit. We have hosted quite a few elections over the past year so I think it's time to begin hosting other events in the arena. I have been reaching out to Breweries/wineries to gauge interest and potential participation in Barleyfest for October of this year. I have received positive feedback so far (not unanimous) but will cautiously move forward with some of the planning to see what Barleyfest could look like if there are still guidelines in place.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dan Wendorf
Parks & Recreation Director
City of Merrill