

March '23 MEETING MINUTES

Merrill Enrichment Center Committee

Meeting was held on March 16th, 2023 at 2:15pm

Merrill Enrichment Center Conference Room – 303 N. Sales Street

Present: Rick Blake (Alderson), Laura Bertagnoli (Chair), Gene Bebel, Sharon Harvey, Teresa Baker,
Rose Akey, Sharon Anderson *Absent:* Jennifer Clark

1. Opening

- a. Bertagnoli called the meeting to order. Roll call included Chantel Kuczmarski (City Communication Specialist)

2. Consent Items

- a. Motion by Harvey second by Bebel to approve February '23 minutes. Motion carried.
- b. Motion by Akey second by Baker to approve Feb/March '23 vouchers. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment

- a. Kuczmarski shared the Merrill-go-Round will provide free rides for the spring election. City website also has information on early voting. Bebel suggested publishing a map district voting locations.
- b. Anderson followed up on Bebel's question from February's meeting regarding adult daycare in Merrill. Achieve & Believe Learning & Recreational Center on 1st street is another provider in addition to Kindhearted.

4. Operations

- a. Director updated the status of our survey attempt. Housing Authority does not seem to be an option for us at this time. Director did check into getting our newsletter into neighboring zip codes outside of Merrill via the Foto News. The cost includes approximately \$200 for the Foto News and \$1000 for additional newsletters. This is affordable for the MEC. The goal is to reach people in more rural areas who may not be aware of the Center and all we have to offer. Suggestions by committee included stuffing our survey into the newsletters. Director stated people would need to mail them back to us and the likelihood of that happening is highly unlikely. Motion made by Bebel second by Blake to approve the expense to get our newsletters into the Foto News. Bebel further stated this would help get information to the town chairmen (County) so they feel they belong to our community, as they feel left out and oftentimes do not receive information. Bertagnoli voiced she would like to ensure the Center has some events in addition to our regular activities when newsletters go into the Foto News to draw people in. Kuczmarski added the possibility of the MEC having newsletters or a presence during MAPS referendum township visits along with the Library and Park & Rec.
- b. Director provided status of endowment fund research. The MEC, with guidance from other departments and city employees, has decided to create a Reserved and Designated Fund Equity account (#26) under the MEC department. This allows more flexibility and access to use the funds as the City and Department see fit for the Center. Director is in the process of writing the marketing and legal documents at this time and will seek council from the appropriate city employees and outside individuals.
- c. Partnership with ADRC continues with the Stockbox program (which provided over \$26,000 of food to those in need in our community) and new workshops focused on brain health and dementia offered by specialists Scott Seeger and Jennifer Thompson.
- d. Director shared status of the new check in system we are looking into. Dustin Brown, city IT manager, had a meeting with the representative to understand the system and how IT would be involved if at all. Director shared quoted cost estimates and benefits of the system with the hopes of implementation this summer.
- e. Due to time constraints, goals will be discussed in our April meeting.

5. ADRC

- a. There is an ongoing need for Meals on Wheels drivers. Any hours you can deliver meals - M-F for 1-1.5 hours.
- b. March 30th is Managing Caregiver stress Class at the Merrill ADRC from 2-3pm, open to anyone caring for a loved one.
- c. The ADRC is looking for individuals who are interested in helping to lead Fall Prevention (Stepping On) classes in the Merrill Community. Stepping On meets once a week for 7-weeks for 2 hours. Classes can be scheduled around the volunteer's schedule. Volunteers should feel comfortable talking in front of smaller (10-12 people) group. They will facilitate with another trained leader. If interested, please reach out!
- d. Alzheimer's Advocacy Day- Tuesday March 7th, a few ADRC staff made the trek to Madison for Alzheimer's advocacy day. It was a great day and provided us with an opportunity to meet with our legislatures and provide information regarding the important work being done to support individuals and families.

6. Discussion

- a. Suggestions for MEC's open house date were early fall and during the week (M-Th.), late afternoon into evening. Interactive demonstrations of our activities such as exercise, arts, and crafts were a suggestion. Bebel suggested invitations to be sent to specific groups in addition to regular marketing efforts. Committee members also suggested that Council members, County board, and Chamber be invited. Snacks and beverages will be provided.
- b. Committee open discussion included getting Stockbox information to the committee and the countless feedback for the ability for people to come and walk here and stay well! Bebel requested we put goal setting on a future meeting agenda.

7. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn by Bebel second by Harvey.

The next meeting date is **April 20th 2023 at 2:15pm at the MEC.**

Vouchers will be available for review 10 minutes prior to meeting time.

Respectfully submitted

TMrachek

Tammie Mrachek, MEC Director