



CITY OF MERRILL
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
AGENDA • THURSDAY MARCH 16, 2023

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:15 PM

To attend remotely call 724-281-3331 PIN 885 988 019 #

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of previous meeting minutes:
 1. Minutes from February 16, 2023 meeting
- III. Discuss and consider the logo and tagline treatment
 1. Logo and Tagline
- IV. Discuss and consider email signatures for departments and elected officials
 1. Email Signature examples
- V. Branding/Marketing Updates:
 1. Merrill Profile Book
 2. Review and consider the Town Hall videos
- VI. Marketing & Communications Update and Monthly Report
 1. Revised Social Media Guidelines
 2. Social media analytics for February 2023
 3. Monthly Report - Communications Consultant Kuczmariski
 - a. Update on logo/tagline rollout
 - b. Discuss letterhead/icons
- VII. Social Media Update and Monthly Report
 1. Discussion regarding ideas to boost engagement and community support
 2. Monthly Report - Social Media Specialist Savall
- VIII. Consider placing monthly reports on file
- IX. Public Comment
- X. Establish next meeting date:
 1. Next regular meeting: Thursday, April 20, 2023 at 5:15 pm
- XI. Adjournment

**CITY OF MERRILL
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, February 16, 2023 - MINUTES
Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers 5:15 p.m.**

Present: Alderperson Blake (Chair) (remote), Alderperson's Weix and Fermanich, Chamber of Commerce – Sturm, Enrichment Center Director – Mrachek, Library Director - Ollhoff

Absent: Gene Bebel, Renea Frederick, Dan Wendorf, John Greenwood

Also Present: City Clerk Anderson-Malm, City Attorney Hayden, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Scott Steele, Communications Specialist Kuczmarski, Social Media Specialist Savall, Jessica Gipp and Merrill Productions Camera Operator.

- I. Chair Blake called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.
- II. **Minutes of previous meeting** – December 19th
Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to approve the January 26th meeting minutes. Chair Blake seconded and the motion carried.
- III. **Branding/Marketing Update:**
A number of topics were discussed including options for the tagline, branding, email signatures, marketing, working with the Festival Grounds Manager, promoting use of the Expo Center and the town hall video editing from November. No formal actions were taken.
- IV. **Presentation of Tagline Graphic – Scott Steele**
Scott Steele discussed the three tagline options that were included in the agenda packet. Discussion occurred between committee members. Jessica Gipp was given floor privileges to speak regarding her thoughts on the tagline font options. After further discussion, Option A was chosen.

Alderperson Fermanich made a motion to use Option A with more spacing between the letters. Alderperson Weix seconded and the motion carried.

Scott Steele will make the corrections to the tagline and bring it to the March meeting.
- V. **Presentation of shrpa – Sarah Sturm**
Chamber of Commerce – Sturm presented information about shrpa. This is a travel platform built to deliver destinations and share activities to do in our area to promote tourism. People can upload pictures on shrpa and the City of Merrill and Chamber of Commerce can use the pictures. The pictures and content can be filtered to use on the City and Chamber websites. There was no formal action taken.
- VI. **Marketing & Communications Update and Monthly Report:**
The majority of the Marketing update was covered in the above agenda item. Communications Specialist Kuczmarski highlighted some of the other items on her monthly report.
- VII. **Social Media Update and Monthly Report:**
Communications Specialist Kuczmarski discussed the Social Media guidelines that were included in the agenda packet.

Marketing & Communications – February 16, 2023

Attachment: 2023-02-16 M&C Minutes (9702 : Minutes from February 16, 2023 meeting)

Social Media Specialist Savall presented her monthly report at the meeting. She highlighted some of the items on her report. She requested Facebook Messenger be turned back on to answer questions. She will monitor and thought it would be nice for people to know someone is here in the City to manage questions and concerns. Interim CA Akey will discuss this with Mayor Hass.

SMS Savall asked the committee to follow the city's Facebook page and let her know any areas they think might need improvement.

VIII. **Consider placing Monthly Reports on file:**

The committee asked to have the meeting moved to the 4th Thursday of each month. Interim CA Akey will discuss this with Mayor Hass.

Aldersperson Fermanich made a motion to place the monthly reports on file. Aldersperson Weix seconded and the motion carried.

IX. **Public Comment:**

There was no public comment.

X **Next meeting date and time:**

The next meeting will be Thursday, March 16 at 5:15 PM

XI. **Adjournment**

Aldersperson Fermanich made a motion to adjourn. Chair Blake seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:24 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

City Clerk – Lori Anderson-Malm

Option A



Option B



Standard Email Signature for City Staff & Elected Officials



(Name) Chantel Kuczmarski

(Title) Communications Consultant

Department

City of Merrill

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Email Signature for Merrill Police Department Employees



(Name) Corey Bennett

(Title) Police Chief

Merrill Police Department

City of Merrill

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Follow MPD:



Email Signature for Merrill Fire Department Employees



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 Fire Chief
 Merrill Fire Department
 City of Merrill
Phone:
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Follow MFD:



Email Signature for Parks & Recreation



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Follow Merrill Parks & Recreation on Facebook:



Email Signature for Merrill Enrichment Center



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 City of Merrill
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Website: www.ci.merrill.wi.us



Email Signature(s) for T.B. Scott Library Staff



**Should be Calibri (body) font.*



CITY OF MERRILL REBRANDS

to attract younger people and families to live and work in Merrill

TINA L. SCOTT, EDITOR
WITH CHANTEL KUCZMARSKI,
CITY OF MERRILL
COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT

In recent years, the City of Merrill has been exploring ways to attract (and retain) younger people and families to the Merrill area who will put down roots, fill jobs and develop career paths with Merrill-area employers, enroll their children in area schools, and become an integral, positive part of the community. Along with addressing housing and day-care issues, the City also began exploring marketing efforts and how the City of Merrill is perceived.

The back story

In 2019, when the City of Merrill was working on Strategic Planning, one goal and discussion centered around marketing the city of Merrill and enhancing citizen civic engagement in government issues. Subsequent discussions led to the formation of a two-year, community-involved research initiative focused on defining the qualities that make the Merrill community unique in the marketplace. John Greenwood led the study, interviewed a cross section of Merrill residents, business owners, community leaders, City staff, and officials, and compiled the findings. What the City learned from the research led to updating the City's Mission, Vision, and Values statements, and to current efforts to rebrand the Merrill community.

In 2021, under the leadership of then Mayor Derek Woellner, the Marketing and Communications (M&C) Committee was formed. Originally, it included Council members Rick Blake, John Van Leishout, and Mark Weix and volunteers—Scott Steele, Vice President, Chief Marketing Officer of Church Mutual Insurance Company; Renea Frederick, Owner of FreMarq Innovations; Melissa Wrycha, Chief Retail Officer at Park City Credit

Union; Bianca Boettcher, Marketing Manager of Thorogood/Weinbrenner Shoe Company; Mike Ravn, retired President and CEO of Church Mutual; John Greenwood, on behalf of Aware and Active Citizens; and Gene Bebel, an engaged resident.

Steele was asked to participate by Church Mutual leadership and by David Johnson [then Merrill City Administrator] and ultimately volunteered a great deal of his time and expertise. "I started participating in July 2020. There had been significant research and background work conducted prior to me joining," he said.

After reviewing the data, "I volunteered to help with the effort and even-

to the M&C Committee were made due to new Council members. Alderpersons Rick Blake (Committee Chair), LaDonna Fermanich, and Mark Weix were appointed to the Committee by Mayor Hass and are voting members of the M&C Committee. Volunteers (who are non-voting members), now serving on the M&C Committee include original members Scott Steele, Renea Frederick, John Greenwood, and Gene Bebel, plus new members: Dan Wendorf, Parks & Recreation Director; Tammie Mrachek, Merrill Enrichment Center Director; Laurie Ollhoff, Director of T.B. Scott Free Library; Sarah Sturm, Marketing Director at Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce (MACC); Chantel Kuczmar

Communication Consultant for the City of Merrill; and Hallie Saval, Social Media Specialist for the City of Merrill.

The problem

The M&C Committee honed in on the findings of Greenwood's original research that focused on discovering and defining what makes Merrill unique in the marketplace.

"That's the driving force behind the creation and execution of the City's marketing and branding plan," said Kuczmar

Census data shows that Merrill's population is declining; family sizes are getting smaller. The city has an aging population. The M&C Committee focused on how to change this trend and bring young professionals and families to the area.

The City's current logo and tagline were identified as one possible problem. "The current logo and tagline are not unique and do not stand out in a crowded market when recruiting younger people to the community," Kuczmar

"The City of Merrill is very proud of its parks, and will market Merrill's year-



tually took the lead on developing the strategy, which included revisiting our Mission and Values, communications issues (of which there were many), branding, and marketing," Steele said. "Each element was addressed, recommended, and approved individually."

"My goal is and has always been to help propel Merrill forward," he said. "I have been honored to be part of a great team of elected officials and passionate citizens. We have a great story to tell, a wonderful place to work and live—but we must face up to our challenges and do something so that we don't lose our heritage, our community, and our people."

In April 2022, former Alderman Steve Hass was elected as Mayor and changes

round recreation," she said, referencing Merrill's long-time tagline as the 'City of Parks.' However, younger audiences want something more than just parks. As identified in the two-year, community-involved research initiative, families and mid-level professionals are looking for more of a work/life balance."

The first proposal

The initial focus of the formal M&C Committee was largely on the City's image and branding. By Nov. 2022, the M&C Committee had developed a cohesive branding plan and a proposed new logo and tagline for the City of Merrill which they thought would hit the mark with the target demographic—all at no cost to the City or to Merrill taxpayers, since volunteers did the work.

The M&C Committee reviewed a variety of logo options. The final logo was selected for its simplicity. The green represents Merrill's trails and forests. The blue represents Merrill's lakes and rivers. A screened back "M" reflects a playful and vibrant community. And unlike the current logo, this logo is bold, unique, and easily recognizable to audiences on small screens and various media platforms.

The M&C Committee recommended "More to Life" as the City's new tagline, because the research indicated the type of people the City is trying to attract to Merrill are looking for more of a work/life balance. "Merrill offers an excellent work/life balance, and we want to sell it," Committee members said.

Representatives from the Committee conducted a small survey of attendees at an event at the Merrill Enrichment Center. The feedback was largely favorable, so the proposed logo and tagline were presented to the City Council and the Council approved the logo at the Oct. 2022 Council meeting.

Kuczmarski began introducing the new logo and tagline, presenting it to the MACC

"The City of Merrill is very proud of its parks, and will market Merrill's year-round recreation."

– Kuczmarski

Board of Directors and to local business owners at the 2022 MACC Annual Banquet in 2022 with positive response. But when she shared it on the City's website and Facebook page, she got some pushback from citizens. While some loved it, others questioned the purpose, the design, the reason for rebranding, and the cost of changing everything citywide—from stationery to garbage trucks. Some simply liked the old logo and tagline better.

Merrill, as a government entity, is working to become more transparent and listen to its citizens. So in response, Mayor Steve Hass and the City Council put the proposed new logo on hold and scheduled a public Town Hall type meeting so the M&C Committee could more formally present and explain the new logo and tagline to the interested citizens, along with reasons for rebranding.

"We heard you! Your voice matters to us. At this time, we've put a pause on the City's new logo and tagline," a message on the City of Merrill website read.

About 20 residents attended the Nov. 17 meeting. "Half of them respectfully

shared their comments at the podium," Kuczmarski said. "The evening ended with a shared sense of pride and excitement, and a united goal to propel Merrill forward."

Fine-tuned and ready to go

But the M&C Committee did process the feedback and opted to fine-tune the tagline. Some attendees at the Town Hall meeting suggested adding the word "Experience" to the "More to Life" tagline. The M&C Committee agreed, and the revised tagline of "Experience More to Life" was approved by the Common Council at their Jan. 10, 2023, meeting.

"The new logo and tagline will be rolled out to City staff and residents in 2023. Plans are still being finalized," Kuczmarski said.

Plans are also in the works to use videos, storytelling, and photography on Merrill's social media outlets to tell Merrill's brand story, she said. In addition, the City of Merrill will have a redesigned website sometime this year, highlighting Merrill's year-round outdoor recreation, small-town charm, and work/life balance.

"I am hopeful that this will increase tourism, and attract new business and residents to our great city, and enhance the businesses we already have, as they are the backbone of our community," said Mayor Hass. "Branding will make our city more visible, it will help attract new people and businesses to our community, and that will make Merrill an even better place to live, work, and play."

It's a start

"Marketing and branding is just one piece of the puzzle in creating a positive future for the city and propelling Merrill forward," Kuczmarski said. "The overall goal of the M&C Committee is to attract and retain residents. However, this will take time and it is a communitywide effort."

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The communitywide research initiative revealed many Merrill residents felt the City was not proactive in sharing what is going on, that their voices were not being heard, and that putting information on the City's website was not enough, she said.

"The City's goals are to increase awareness and engagement, provide more access to information, enhance transparency, and reinforce credibility," Kuczmarski said.

"More people are using social media as a tool for information. In the past six months, we've enhanced communications on the City's Facebook page ... We will continue to grow our social media presence," she said.

Kuczmarski will work with Hallie Savall, who was hired as a part-time independent contractor just this past month as Social Media Specialist for the City, to coordinate and enhance communications via social media. And Kuczmarski will be updating the City's website and continuing to share news on the website, as well.

Funding to pay Kuczmarski and Savall currently comes from the CATV franchise fund, not direct tax dollars.

The M&C Committee will continue to

use surveys to collect feedback from the community.

Fermanich and Kuczmarski enumerated the multifaceted benefits of re-branding and marketing: It will help put Merrill on the map and raise awareness about all the amenities Merrill offers, increase tourism, attract new businesses, bring young people and families to the area, attract more developers and investors, increase property values and grow the tax base, and bring more activities, attractions, and events to the area.

"Many people are looking for an affordable place to live with excellent schools, low crime, and a work/life balance," Kuczmarski said. "Merrill offers all of those things and more. We need to get this message out there and put Merrill in the spotlight."

Step up, build and live the brand

Merrill residents need to embrace and live out the brand in their everyday lives. It has to be more than just a tagline.

"When people come to Merrill, we want them to find friendly, neighborly, outdoorsy, and hardworking people here. Our brand promise must be true," Kuczmarski said. "We need everyone on board to showcase the attributes that

make Merrill truly unique and special."

"Ideally," Fermanich said, "the community should begin to see all the things about our community from a resident's perspective—things we tend to take for granted and may not recognize as a desired feature because we've always had them at our disposal."

"Tell people how great our City is. Let them know what we have to offer over other communities," Mayor Hass said.

"Experience More to Life" means Merrill offers an extraordinary life balance, with plentiful jobs, playgrounds, year-round outdoor recreation, affordable housing, excellent schools, and a strong sense of community, the M&C Committee said.

For those looking to venture into a new city, Merrill is a short drive to Wausau or you can conveniently take the highway to Eau Claire, Minneapolis, Green Bay, or Madison. Merrill is centrally located, allowing residents to experience rural or big city amenities.

Once the word gets out, this is going to entice people from outside the area to come to Merrill. Meanwhile, for those of us who already live here, let's live the brand. Enjoy all Merrill has to offer. Experience More to Life.

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City of Merrill Social Media Guidelines

The City of Merrill's guidelines for social media use encourage some conduct and prohibit other conduct. Some examples of useful, positive conduct include:

- Be honest and transparent.
- Post only within your area of expertise. When creating new posts, make sure that posts are read by the appropriate leader. *This does not apply to shared posts or events. We agreed to share posts from the school district and community happenings.*
- Post only useful information.
- Keep it professional - avoid confrontation.
- Be accurate.
- Correct errors, and if modifying an earlier post, identify the change.
- Be responsive to citizen concerns.
- All posts must be under the City of Merrill profile and clearly identified as a credible source.

DO NOT POST:

- Information about actual or potential claims and litigation involving the government.
- Defamatory material.
- Any personal, sensitive or confidential information about anyone.
- Obscene, pornographic or other offensive/illegal materials or links.
- Racist, sexist, and other disparaging language about a group of people.
- Sexual comments about, or directed to, anyone.
- Political campaign materials or comments.
- Threatening or harassing comments.
- Other information that is not public in nature.

Some of the major concerns that could go wrong with social media are the following:

- Bad information that misleads the public and causes harm
- Violation of intellectual property rights
- Disclosure of private or confidential information
- Harassment
- Defamation

To address these concerns, we will remove public comments that are obscene or pornographic, defamatory, harassing, commercial, criminal, political, or that violate the intellectual property rights of others. All comments are subject to disclosure as public records.

Social media evolves quickly and is a powerful tool. This policy will be reviewed and revised to meet the changing environment of social media marketing.

Wisconsin open records laws have yet to fully address the online space, but there are few conclusions that have been drawn to keep us protected when responding to individuals, who post on government platforms:

- We cannot block anyone from our platforms (1st amendment)
- We cannot permanently delete comments (1st amendment)
- We may be able to hide comments that are deemed threatening, abusive, vulgar, etc. but we should have a disclosure statement somewhere on the platform providing notification.
- Messages received may also request public information, very similar to an open record request. Even though this is not received on our official form, it is still a record request we must honor or respond to. They are not required by law to use our form to make such a request.
- Record request responses must be specific to any redaction or denial. If we are not specific to the court supported reason for denial, we generally cannot argue that point in court at a later time.
- We should keep a record of the response given to any open records request inclusive of the records released for that request.

The Police Dept. addresses open records requests.

Social Media Report – February 2023 (Feb. 1-28, 2023)

Facebook Page Reach: 12,847 (Up 73% from the previous month.)

- *The number of people who saw any content from your Page or about your page, including posts, stories, ads, social information from people who interact with your page and more. *Reach is different from impressions, which may include multiple views of your posts by the same people.*

Facebook Page Visits: 1,057 (Down 16% from the previous month.)

- *The number of times your Facebook page was visited.*

New Facebook Page Likes: 41 New Likes (Up 28% from previous month.)

Content (Most Popular by Reach)

1. Winter Oval Races at the Gleason Community Club – (Reach: 5,898; Likes, Reactions, Comments & Shares: 223)
2. The Merrill Ice Drags – (Reach: 2,545; Likes, Reactions, Comments & Shares: 75)
3. Looking for things to do? Listing of Feb. events – (Reach: 2,267; Likes, Reactions, Comments & Shares: 66)
4. Library Needs Study – (Reach: 2,170; Likes, Reactions, Comments & Shares: 67)
5. Badger State Games – (Reach: 1,941; Likes, Reactions, Comments & Shares: 17)

We currently do not have paid social media ads.

March 16, 2023

Marketing & Communications Monthly Report by Chantel Kuczmarski

Description: The Communications Consultant is responsible for communications that consistently and adequately inform Merrill community residents and local businesses about issues, programs and initiatives that will have a direct impact on them or their neighborhoods and to regularly engage individuals in open and meaningful dialogue. The Communications Consultant will provide a central point of contact for City internal and external communication efforts.

Community Outreach

- Attended the Library Needs Study at T.B. Scott Free Library.
 - Working with Library Director to announce next steps and keep residents informed.
- Attended the Chamber's Business after 5 networking event.
- Attended the Enrichment Center Committee Meeting.
- Attended AAC's Executive meeting.

Media Relations

- Interviewed with Isak Dinesen of Channel 9, highlighting the City's Community Development Housing Program. (It was a top story at 6 p.m.)
- Will be working with Channel 9 and other news outlets to highlight the City's Community Development Block Grant program.
- Received copies of the Merrill Profile Book. It includes a 3-page article about the City's rebranding efforts. Several M&C members were quoted. The article is copied in the packet for your reference.
- Requested interviews of City staff/elected officials who appear on Bluejay radio.
- Meeting/corresponding with local reporters to build relations.

Website Enhancements

- Working with GovOffice to update the City's website.
- The new website is on hold until we have the revised logo with "Experience More to Life."

Internal Communications / City Communications

- Posted communications advertising bids for pickleball courts.
- Created/posted communications about the snow emergency and rescheduled public meetings.
- Created/posted communications for the Community Development Housing Program.
- Created/posted communications announcing a need for poll workers for the Spring Election.
- Posted information about the Spring Election, absentee voting and public notices.
- Worked with staff to post misc. messages on the City's website and Facebook page. (*Misc. announcements*)

Photography

- Building photo gallery.
- Set up a shared DropBox.

Digital Marketing

- Reviewing Midwest Communication's proposal in detail. Plan to launch a digital marketing campaign in June.

Rollout of Logo/Tagline

- Created a variety of email signatures for City departments. Asked department heads for their feedback, as requested by the Committee. Email signatures are included in the packet. Once approved, I will send to department heads.
 - Next step is to create letterheads and business cards.

Misc.

- Host weekly meetings with Social Media Specialist Hallie Savall and Mayor Steve Hass.
- Met with Greg Eichelkraut, race director of the Black Squirrel Scurry Triathlon, and Sarah Sturm, marketing director of the Merrill Chamber, to discuss promotions for the Black Squirrel Scurry Triathlon, which will be held July 29, 2023, as well as marketing silent sports in Lincoln County.
- Working with Rick Bjorklund to promote events on Merrill Festival Grounds.
- Put up posters on community boards, advertising the Girls on the Run 5K Event.

Social Media Updates

- Revised social media guidelines.
- Working on social media messaging for 2023.
- See analytics for February 2023.
- Turned on the City's messenger feature and received the following message from a FB follower:

"Hello! My grandparents live on Taylor St. and my mom grew up there in Merrill. I'm a marketing professional in Illinois and was reading up on the re-brand and wanted to compliment you all for your efforts. I know it's difficult to win over local residents with this stuff, but it's a great first step in changing the narrative on how people view Merrill from the outside."

Rollout of Logo/Tagline

Internal Messaging

Deliverable	Status
Create uniform, branded email signatures for City staff and elected officials	Pending approval
Create letterheads	April 2023
Create business cards	April 2023

Communications to Merrill Residents

Deliverable	Status
Create snippets of the town hall meeting & share on social media/website	Pending approval
Attend events/community meetings/etc. to highlight the meaning of <i>Experience More to Life</i>	Ongoing
Create a communications station at City Hall	

External Messaging

Deliverable	Status
Create messaging and ads for 2023 Visitor's Guide	Completed
Schedule appearances with TV/radio hosts to talk about Merrill's rebranding efforts	Ongoing
Send new logo with tagline to media contacts along with press release	Pending approval of tagline treatment
Implement paid social media, advertising <i>Experience More to Life</i> to our target audience	June 2023
Implement digital marketing campaign (display ads, keyword searches and geofencing)	June 2023
New website	2023
Implement new City Signage	2023-2028

Merrill | Department Icons



Streets
Department



Parks and
Recreation



Finance

The “M” works very well as a distinct and vibrant mark for the various departments.

Bring the Community together.

One of our brand pillars is community. We want to stand out from other cities. We want to show what we, as a small town, are all about. When I look for a sense of community, people helping and supporting people is immediately what I think of. Bringing the community and families together.

When I think of the people of Merrill, I think tight knit, helpful and caring. We want to show potential residents and tourists of Merrill what we are capable of. One aspect is helping others when they need it most. One of the ways we, as the city of Merrill can help, is to get the word out for benefits that truly help those in need. This shows a sense of community, small town charm, and how much we care for others.

We all know someone who's had a benefit. We've been there to help. Let's show what we can do and grow the local benefits to be better than ever. Just think of how many more people could show up to these benefits because they know about it from our page and others sharing our post. People could donate baskets, goods for bake sales, and support just by showing up. We support businesses, the humane society, city fire and police department charities, benefits and fundraisers. Why not support the citizens as well.

To get this up and rolling I would like to make a post at the beginning of each month to let the citizens know we are doing this in support of the community . This is what that post could look like. -

Supporting our local community-

The City of Merrill wants to show support of those who are having benefits. If you, a friend, or family member is having a local benefit, we want to hear from you. Please use Facebook messenger to send us the following information- who, what, where, when, and why. If you have a photo or flyer to go with the benefit please send that as well. We will reach out to you with any additional questions.

The way I envision getting these benefits out into the public is posting on social media using the information given to us via Facebook messenger. The recipient, friend or family member would need to message in the information, who it's for, a

little bit about the benefit, and why it's being held. It is the responsibility of them to message in. I believe they should show initiative to have it posted on our page.

We can post each benefit individually or multiple benefits in one post.

Here is an example of a benefit post (from last year) that we would share.

We have been selected for a pancake breakfast benefit this weekend at Eagles Club to help provide some financial relief to the Matt and Hailey Clark family. Brandtly (Our Nephew) just turned 4 years old. He was recently diagnosed with Wilm's Tumor. The cancer was contained to the left kidney thankfully. Brandtly has undergone extensive Radiation and Chemo treatments, and is waiting on further scans to compare to prior scans and another biopsy to check for the aggressiveness of the cancer. We will have various raffles, a bake sale and 50/50 drawings throughout the day as well.

If anyone would like to donate a raffle item towards the benefit please contact Justin to make these arrangements.

March Monthly Report

Social Media Specialist Monthly Report

Description - The Social Media Specialist is responsible for developing social media content that engages audiences and identifies creative online marketing strategies to attract residents, workers and visitors to the city. The SMS will collaborate with staff and members of the Marketing & Communications Committee to develop successful Social Media Campaigns. This position works closely with and reports to the Communications Consultant, who will review and approve the posts.

Tasks - I continue to build knowledge in our rebranding to fully understand what we will be accomplishing in the upcoming months. Getting up to speed on the projects already in motion and learning more about my position has been a focus for this month as well. I have also been in contact with local citizens who are interested in what we are doing and helping them understand our brand and where to go for more information. (Video from town hall meeting until the clips come out.)

I have met weekly with Mayor, Chantel and Rick to stay up to date on events and the public meetings that I have not attended.

Events - I attended events in February to help promote winter recreation in the area. Fat tire races and the Merrill Ice Drags. I have also gone to some of the housing developments to showcase the progress we have made with the RDA.

Social Media - I have been scheduling posts for the rest of March and filling up April's Calendar with information, local events and happenings - election, school musical, waterway trail, and history of Merrill to name a few. I have also followed and researched other surrounding cities' posts on their pages to positively promote their city. I have also been reaching out to individuals and corporations to gather information on the events they have and will be holding to help promote their events and locations. We have grown in our following and have had some interaction on posts. I would like to ask the community in the next month what they would like to see on the page to be able to listen to those who are paying attention to what we are doing.

Have you taken a look at the city page? What are your thoughts? Where can we improve?