

**CITY OF MERRILL
COMMON COUNCIL
Tuesday, March 14, 2023 MINUTES**

Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers 7:00 p.m.

- I. **Call to Order:** Mayor Hass called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following elected officials, department heads and residents were in attendance:

Elected Officials and Department Heads present: Mayor Hass, City Attorney Hayden, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Finance Director Unertl, Fire Chief Klug, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Library Director Ollhoff, Park & Recreation Director Wendorf, Police Chief Bennett, Transit Director Brummond, Street Superintendent Bonack and Utility Operations Manager Steinagel.

Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel was excused

Others in attendance: Pastor Hohman, Sue Kunkel, Carol Willis, John Willis, Jamie Willis, Renea Frederick, Todd Frederick, Kyle Gulke, Eric Pfantz and Merrill Productions.

- II. **Invocation** by Pastor Paul Hohman – New Testament Church

- III. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited.

- IV. **Roll Call** was taken and the following alderperson's were in attendance:

Paul Russell – First District	Excused
Michael "Gus" Caylor – Second District	Present
Rick Blake – Third District	Present
LaDonna Fermanich – Fourth District	Present
Dick Lupton – Fifth District	Present
Mike Rick - Sixth District	Present
Mark Weix – Seventh District	Present
Steve Sabatke – Eighth District	Present

- V. **Public Comment** – Eric Pfantz – 5331 Brody Drive, Madison – formerly from Merrill, spoke about the Housing policy for Merrill. He feels single family housing is ineffective. He stated this is a bad policy and does not increase population. He spoke about Madison and how they increase population density by building larger buildings. He also stated young people can't afford to purchase a home.

Kyle Gulke – 1504 Jackson St – Spoke regarding the City Administrator position. He said the position is worth finding a way to fund the position.

- VI. **Minutes of previous Common Council meeting** – February 14, 2023
Aldersperson Caylor made a motion to place the minutes from the February 14, 2023 Common Council meeting on file. Aldersperson Rick seconded and the motion carried.

- VII. **Revenue & Expense Reports:**
Aldersperson Lupton made a motion to approve the February 2023 Revenue and Expense reports. Aldersperson Weix seconded.

Alderson Fermanich asked a question to the Finance Director regarding the projected shortfall of PILOT. Finance Director Unertl responded to the question. Following discussion the motion carried.

VIII. Personnel & Finance:

1. Discuss and consider excluding access to closed sessions via remote and for the City Attorney and Administrators create a policy – Alderson Caylor made a motion to have the City Attorney and Administrators create a policy to exclude remote access for closed sessions. Alderson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried.

IX. Health & Safety:

1. Consider a Temporary Class “B” picnic license for the Lincoln County Humane Society for an event on March 18, 2023 at the AGRA Pavilion.

Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the temporary Class “B” picnic license for the Lincoln County Humane Society for March 18, 2023. Alderson Weix seconded and the motion carried.

X. Board of Public Works:

1. Consider Struck & Irwin micro surfacing bid for 2023.

Alderson Lupton made a motion to approve the bid from Struck & Irwin for micro surfacing. Alderson Rick seconded and the motion carried.

2. Consider the bids for the following projects:

a. Webster Street paving bid – Northeast Asphalt

Alderson Sabatke mentioned this did not pass Board of Public Works unanimously.

Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the Webster Street paving bid for Northeast Asphalt. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

b. E. 10th Street reconstruction bid – Merrill Gravel and Construction

Alderson Sabatke made a motion to send this back to the Board of Public Works to re-work for the \$45,000 difference. Alderson Caylor seconded for discussion.

Discussion commenced with Mayor Hass, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey and council members. Finance Director Unertl mentioned all projects were TID funded. After discussion Alderson Caylor withdrew his second.

Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the bid for E. 10th Street reconstruction to Merrill Gravel and Construction. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried on a 6-1 voice vote. Alderson Sabatke voted no.

c. O’day Street reconstruction bid – Merrill Gravel and Construction

Alderson Sabatke spoke about the large difference between the budget and the bids. PWDCE Akey responded to the question and concerns by Alderson Sabatke. FD Unertl mentioned this would be funded by TID 9 and other TID transfers.

After discussion Alderson Rick made a motion to approve the bid for O’day Street reconstruction from Merrill Gravel and Construction. The motion carried on a 4-3 roll call vote. Alderson’s Caylor, Fermanich and Sabatke voted no.

XI. Employee Recognition:

Dane Mathwich – 15 years (Police Department)

XII. Place Committee Reports on File:

Aldersperson Blake made a motion to place the committee reports on file. Aldersperson Lupton seconded and the motion carried.

XIII. Ordinances:

City Attorney Hayden read the ordinance amending Chapter 16, Section 16-1, 30-31 through 30-32, Solid Waste and Recycling. Aldersperson Caylor made a motion to suspend the rules and give the second and third readings by title only. Aldersperson Rick seconded. City Attorney Hayden gave the Ordinance the second and third readings by title only.

Aldersperson Rick made a motion to accept the amended ordinance. Aldersperson Lupton seconded and the motion carried on a 7-0 roll call vote.

XIV. Resolutions:

A Resolution honoring Steve P. Willis for his extended service and great contribution to the City of Merrill and extending condolences to his family

WHEREAS, Steve Willis passed away suddenly on February 18, 2023; and,

WHEREAS, Steve Willis has been a valued member of the Merrill Transit Commission since his appointment in April 2010; and

WHEREAS, he was known for his love of travel, his technological capabilities, his musical talents, his generosity and positive manner and nature; and,

WHEREAS, Steve Willis's cheerful manner, humor, wit and unwavering dedication to the Transit Commission will be greatly missed; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor, Common Council, officials and employees of the City of Merrill and its Transit Commission were saddened by the sudden death of Steve Willis;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 14th day of March, 2023, that the Common Council and the people of Merrill officially acknowledge with deep appreciation the dedicated and faithful service Steve P. Willis gave to the City of Merrill, commend him for those years of service, and extend our deepest condolences and sympathy to the family of Steve Willis.

City Attorney Hayden read the Resolution. Aldersperson Blake made a motion to approve the resolution honoring Steve P. Willis. Aldersperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

XV. Mayor's Communications:

Mayor Hass had the following communications:

March 18 – Humane Society Fund Raiser at the AGRA Pavilion

March 18 – a Lane Auction will be held at the Enrichment Center

March 25 - National Medal of Honor Day

April 1 – Kids Fest at the MARC

April 4 – Build your own Peep House Cookie and Candy craft from 3:45pm – 5:00pm

April 6 – Career Fair at the Merrill Senior High School

April 8 – Easter Egg Hunt at the MARC

April 26 – Critic's Choice Movie – Green Book (2018) at 1:00pm – 3:30pm

XVI. Adjournment:

Alderson Rick made a motion to adjourn. Alderson Lupton seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 PM.

The complete Ordinance is available on the City of Merrill website: <https://www.ci.merrill.wi.us/>

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori L Anderson-Malm – City Clerk