

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

