



City of Merrill
Merrill Park and Recreation
Department
1100 Marc Drive | Merrill, WI | 54452
Phone: (715) 536-7313/Smith Center
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DECEMBER MEETING NOTICE

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission will have a meeting on **Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.**

Voting members of Commission: Jean Ravn, Rebecca Rutkowski, Kyle Gulke, Joan Tabor, Mark Weix, Chad Krueger 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. Final 2024 budget update.
5. Updates on Lincoln County ARPA requests.
6. Consider names for connector trail (trail connecting Prairie Trails to River Bend Trail).
7. Monthly reports.
8. Set date for next meeting.
9. Public comment
10. Adjournment

Submitted by,

Dan Novitch, Chairperson
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

November 1, 2023

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 4:15 p.m., at Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Kyle Gulke, Chad Krueger, Dan Novitch, Rebecca Rutkowski, and Jean Ravn

Members Excused Absent: Mark Weix, Joan Tabor

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Rutkowski to approve the minutes from the October meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Krueger, seconded by Ravn, to approve the claims from October.

Krueger questioned if Park and Recreation has seen a savings since they no longer provide dumpsters at every park. Wendorf stated that they will save between \$10,000 - \$12,000 dollars.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: none

The next item on the agenda was an update on 2024 budget. Wendorf stated that the Operations budget was uneventful and should go through and the Capitol budget has remained the same. Novitch questioned if everything goes through on November 14 it's done and no more changes can be made. Wendorf stated that was correct.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss River Bend trail extension from Wastewater Treatment Plant to Bluebird Lane. Wendorf stated that himself, Rod Akey, and a person from the DNR walked and marked out where they could go with the trail and what can be cleared. Unfortunately they may not be able to pave due to it potentially being in a flood plain. Wendorf stated that they will probably use crushed gravel. Wendorf stated that the trail is marked and ready to go so when there is funding available they will be able to start. Volunteers helped clean brush on October 28. This is as far as the City of Merrill will be able to go with the trail. Some discussion was held.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had questions. Wendorf stated that he has been in contact with the County and has handed everything in for the funding request through ARPA. Wendorf stated that next Thursday he will be meeting with the County and Land Services regarding the funding. Wendorf stated he finally was able to talk with the company who did the Map It app. Wendorf will update the commission at the next meeting.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Public Comment: none

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Rutkowski to adjourn at 4:45 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary

11/1/2023

VIP OFFICE PRODUCTS	PENS AND STAMPER	10/25/2023	0114593-001	\$20.95	10-55400-03-10000
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL	10/31/2023	9694773	\$60.32	10-55200-02-15000
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL	10/31/2023	9695170	\$81.80	10-55200-02-15000
ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION	MEMBERSHIP	11/23/2023		\$25.00	10-55200-03-32000
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING	11/1/2023		\$148.00	10-55400-02-23600
BRANDT EXTINGUISHERS	ANNUAL INSPECTION	11/8/2023	13450	\$61.00	10-55400-02-16500
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM, JOE, RYAN	10/25/2023	417811097	\$1,028.85	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM, JOE, RYAN	11/1/2023	4172527048	\$128.85	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM, JOE, RYAN	11/8/2023	4173240412	\$128.85	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	MOPS/MATS	11/15/2023	4173995802	\$150.89	10-55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM, JOE, RYAN	11/15/2023	4173995773	\$128.85	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM, JOE, RYAN	11/21/2023	4174659854	\$128.85	10-55200-03-460000
FERGUSON	SHOP SUPPLIES	11/13/2023	7511697-1	\$176.88	10-55200-03-40000
FERGUSON	SHOP SUPPLIES	11/10/2023	7511697	\$3.27	10-55200-03-40000
FLEET FARM	SUPPLIES FOR MARC	11/17/2023		\$56.56	10-55200-08-91000
GREEN LAWN	WINTERIZATION - LIONS	12/2/2023	23-31893	\$300.00	10-55200-02-15000
GREEN LAWN	WINTERIZATION - MARC	12/2/2023	23-31892	\$200.00	10-55200-02-15000
GREEN LAWN	WINTERIZATION - MERRILL ATHLETIC PARK	12/2/2023	23-31894	\$175.00	10-55200-02-15000
JOCELYN GEBERT	SECURITY DEPOSIT	10/30/2023	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
JOY ANNIS	PAYED FOR INFLATABLES	11/7/2023	VOUCHER	\$37.89	10-55300-03-41500
MENARDS	CHRISTMAS SUPPLIES	11/17/2023		\$461.57	26-55300-03-60022
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	AIR FILTERS	10/25/2023	229740	\$61.92	55400-03-44000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	CABLE TIES, GARBAGE BAGS	11/7/2023	230036	\$66.94	10-55200-08-91000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	HEATED VEST/CLOTHING ALLOWENCE	11/7/2023	230035	\$179.00	10-55200-03-46500
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	FASTENERS	11/16/2023	230270	\$2.49	10-55200-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	FILTERS/WINDEX	11/20/2023	230337	\$106.67	10-55400-03-44000
MERRILL FOTO NEWS	MERRILLOPOLY	11/7/2023		\$160.00	10-55400-03-41000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-2 - FORD F250	10/31/2023	19731	\$917.70	10-55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-18 - GRAVELY ZERO TURN MOWER	10/30/2023	19728	\$449.61	10-55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	P-12 - NEW HOLLAND TRACTOR	10/16/2023	19715	\$754.31	10-55200-03-50000



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December 2023 Parks & Recreation Director's Report

Parks: Well it appears that our extended fall season has come to an end and we are transitioning to winter. We took delivery of our new John Deere front deck mower with attachments just in time for the snow. This is the piece of equipment we budgeted for this year and ordered in February after bids. Our old one went to City Hall maintenance for them to use at the Festival Grounds, Enrichment Center, and Library. With the extended decent fall weather, our crew had the opportunity to get a lot of things done. This includes extra leaf mulching in all of our parks, installation of the three extra disc golf baskets at Riverside, planted all trees that were ordered, brushing, and athletic field work to name a few. We now have all of our equipment switched over to winter mode for snow removal and ice rink making so we are ready to go when the conditions are right. This winter we will not be doing an ice rink at Ott's Park. The location of the former rink was where the pickleball courts now sit, plus our usage at that rink was very minimal so that will save us money in not having to maintain. We will also begin bringing in our damaged picnic tables from all of our park facilities to our shop to begin repairing them when we have time over the winter months. It always amazes me how many picnic tables we have to fix each and every year from the beating they take. All facilities that needed to be winterized are done. The Agra Pavilion continues to be a popular spot and is reserved quite heavily again this year over the winter months. The 2024 budgetary process has concluded with no changes since my last update to the Commission. The budget passed at the 11/14/23 Common Council meeting for the upcoming year with the same operating and capital requests I shared with you. On 11/9 I met with Lincoln County Administrators to begin discussing our ARPA requests. We had a very good, lengthy discussion and began moving forward on a couple of items. The "Map it" idea is one that they are very excited about and we are forming a team of people to begin tackling that task and begin to bring in those who can help us accomplish that. The other items are a work in progress as far as funding goes as the county still has some decisions they need to make on overall funding related to ARPA. I do know that the Nicklaus Bridge request we put forth will not be considered, as it does not meet their threshold/criteria for funding. I also attended two Tourism Commission meetings in November to set the 2024 Tourism Budget.

Forestry: As previously mentioned, our crew was able to accomplish the large task of planting 180 trees this fall. This is the most trees that we have ever planted on our boulevards and parks since I have been here (with the exception of the replanting of the red pine plantation after the tornado). I would like to continue to plant even more trees next year and each year after that so we can continue to get well ahead of the trees that we lose to natural mortality and other causes each year. The planting process went very well and the weather was very cooperative and we are thankful for that. If you haven't had a chance to see some of the areas, we planted over a dozen trees between Culvers and Cobblestone on the south side of 64 as well as 16 trees along the boulevard on Center Avenue from the bridge up to O'Day St to name a few high profile locations where we are going to continue to re-stock trees and beautify some high traffic areas into our community over the next several years. I began the paperwork for our 2023 Tree City USA application. It is always due by December 31st of each year. We will once again qualify with flying colors and should have no problems becoming a Tree City once again. I have also been spending a fair amount of time with data entry in our TreeKeeper Online forestry system. Every tree that we plant has to have its own data set. Address, species, condition, site number, type of maintenance, etc.



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Recreation: We are preparing for our 2nd Annual Winter Wonderland at the Agra Pavilion on 12/8/23. This event was designed to replace our traditional Breakfast with Santa. Last year (our first annual) was a great success that we hope to springboard into continued success as the years go on. We have had great feedback and support from local businesses, sponsors, and participants last year. We will have the Agra Pavilion lit up with Christmas Lights and decorations as well as segments of the trail that we continue to add to as funding comes in. It is our goal to light up the Pavilion and trail and really brighten that area up for the holiday season with some wow-factor. Eventually we'd like for this to be something that attracts people from out of town to check out. We have also been working to promote our upcoming Little Dribblers Youth Co-Ed Basketball program that begins in January at Kate Goodrich School. We are hoping to build off of the very strong numbers we had last year in Little Dribblers and continue to build it up. As always, we are going to begin spending quite a bit of time organizing our 2024 spring/summer/fall recreation program. There is a tremendous amount of work that goes into it and Dawn always does an amazing job putting it all together. We like to have it done by end of March/early April so that people have enough time to register for programs.

Smith Center: We have had over a full month of ice time now and things have been going good thus far. Merrill Youth Hockey's ice buy is down a bit due to a few less teams than previous years, but we have supplemented those hours with ice buys from other organizations and out of town teams. We are always more than happy to rent our ice to anyone and everyone is always very impressed with our facility and our ice. Our Co-Op team (East Merrill United) has started varsity games already and we get ½ of the home games and Marathon Park in Wausau gets the other ½ for the Wausau East fans. It has been working out just fine over the past few years and we are happy to be their home ice. We are also very thankful for the recently finished MARC Street Light project! The Street Department finished up a few weeks ago and the difference that makes in our entire parking lot is unbelievable. WPS removed their old light poles that we had to pay a monthly fee for and we installed our own LED yard lights that now cover the entirety of all three parking lots on our grounds. It is so much brighter, better looking, and safer for all of our park visitors. It will also save us money by not having the monthly service charges for WPS yard lights.

Note: As we close out another year I would like to sincerely thank each and every one of our amazing staff members. We are very fortunate to have the best team to work with. This includes all of our full time, part time, seasonals, volunteers, and everyone in between. I am not sure if everyone truly understands the ground that we cover each year and the responsibilities that we have here at the Parks & Recreation Department. I do not take that for granted for one second and I hope that others appreciate all of our employees for another job very well done!! Many times it is thankless, and yet they continue to truly serve the public with a smile – and we are a better community because of them. So please join me in thanking all of our Parks & Recreation employees for all of the amazing things they do!!

Respectfully Submitted,

Dan Wendorf
Parks & Recreation Director
City of Merrill