

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

February 3, 2021

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, February 3, 2021 at 4:15 p.m., virtual meeting.

Members Present: Dan Novitch, Kyle Gulke, Jean Ravn, Brian Artac, Joan Tabor, and John Van Lieshout

Members Excused Absent: Amanda Groth

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: City Administrator Dave Johnson

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Gulke to approve the minutes from the January meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Tabor, to approve the claims from January.

Gulke questioned what P-12 and P-15 were? He noticed that there was work performed by the street department on the items. Wendorf stated that all the equipment has numbers on them so both departments have an easier way of keeping track of work performed.

Artac questioned what the Treekeeper subscription was for. Wendorf stated that it a yearly cost. Treekeeper keeps track of all the trees in the City. Wendorf stated that they will be switching over to a different program that Kate Drewek has created. There will no longer be a yearly cost and it will save a lot of time between departments. Wendorf stated that when he enters information on a tree, if work needs to be performed on that tree, a message will be sent to the Street Department informing the location of tree and work that needs to be done.

Ravn questioned if there was a new sign on the Riverbend trail. Wendorf stated that as part of the contribution made by Merrill Rotary, the request was to have a Rotary Sign put up.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

The next item on the agenda was to review and approve Safe Routes to School Resolution. Wendorf stated that the Park and Recreation Commission does not need to approve it because the Health and Safety Committee approved it and will be on City Council next week.

The next item on the agenda was a continued discussion on 10 year Capital Plan. Wendorf stated that he added on the Curling Center and the new Skate Park. Wendorf stated that things that are not approved one year get pushed onto another year, so some years may have more items on them.

***Motion made by Van Lieshout, seconded by Artac to approve the 10 Year Capital Plan.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to begin discussion on review and revision of Forestry Ordinances. Wendorf stated that this is part of the Urban Forestry Grant. Wendorf stated that he

has been working on a few revisions. He will continue to update the Commission and will be gather information on why some changes need to be made. Gulke stated that he would like to make a suggestion that more native species should be added and would like to see more fruit and pollinators bearing trees. This item will be put back on the agenda.

The next item on the agenda is continued discussion on potential extension of ice time in Smith Center. Wendorf stated that at this time there is not enough interest in keeping the ice in longer. Wendorf stated that MIR was given some open ice times that are available for utilizing more skate sessions.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss summer recreation plans. Wendorf stated that his plan for this summer is open all programs up. Wendorf stated that this year the department has more knowledge and more experience dealing with COVID-19. Plans are being made for all programs including summer playground and the aquatic center. Wendorf stated that all recommendations from the county will be followed. Wendorf stated that his recommendation would be to open all programs, aquatic center and park reservations and utilize current guidelines.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Wendorf stated that he was happy to see numbers in Lincoln County go down for COVID-19. Wendorf stated that he has been advertising for the new position and have received about 13 applications. Wendorf stated that he feels we will have enough people to open the aquatic center but applications for other programs are short. Wendorf stated for summer playground we would need employees 18 and older. Tabor questioned about how many hours summer playground workers get. Wendorf stated between 30 and 40 a week. Artac questioned how the ventilation in the Smith Center is. Wendorf stated that the Smith Center has good ventilation.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 3 at 4:15 p.m. location to be determined.

Public Comment: none

***Motion by Vanlieshout, seconded by Ravn to adjourn at 5:05 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary