



CITY OF MERRILL

Parks & Recreation Dept. - Smith Center

1100 Marc Drive - Merrill, WI 54452

Rec. Dept. Telephone (715)536-7313 * Smith Center (715)536-6187

Fax (715)539-2790

FEBRUARY MEETING NOTICE

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission will have a meeting on **Wednesday, February 1, 2022 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.**

Voting members of Commission: Jean Ravn, Brian Artac, 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. Review & approve bids for new front mower
5. Discuss 2023-2024 budgetary challenges and potential solutions
6. Review & approve Bierman Family Aquatic Center operating hours for 2023 season.
7. Continued discussion on waste removal options for park shelters.
8. Review and approve route for River Bend to Prairie Trails Connector Trail.
9. Review and potentially approve property acquisition from MADC along the River Bend Trail.
10. Review of Personal and Finance Committee Grant acceptance discussion.
11. Monthly reports.
12. Set date for next meeting.
13. Public comment
14. Adjournment

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Novitch".

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 & Recreation Commission

December 7th, 2022

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, December 7th, 2022 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Kyle Gulke, Joan Tabor, Jean Ravn, Brian Artac, Mark Weix, Dan Novitch

Members Excused Absent: Chad Krueger

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf

***Motion Artac, seconded by Ravn to approve the minutes from the November Meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss the claims. Novitch asked if there were any questions. Gulke asked why there was a charge for the stolen flower watering truck. Wendorf said that the insurance company paid the City that exact amount and we paid Breaman's for the work when it was finished. Wendorf informed the Commission that the transmission was replaced and the truck is fixed with the exception of a few cosmetic things on the front passenger side that will get taken care of before next summer.

***Motion Weix, seconded by Tabor to approve the claims from November.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss a request from a citizen to place a "Free Blockbuster Movie" Stand in a park location. There was a picture that the person sent showing they refurbished an old newspaper stand to serve as the movie exchange hub. Wendorf said he spoke with this individual and their initial request was to place this in Normal Park but Wendorf said he would prefer to place it somewhere else because Normal Park currently has so many things in it. Wendorf said he discussed a few other locations with the requestor including Streeter Square or Banker's Square. Wendorf said he prefers Banker's Square because an old newspaper stand would look like it belonged there and would provide for a great spot because of all of the retail in that downtown area. The consensus from the Commission after discussion was that they really liked the Banker's Square location and Wendorf stated that the department would install it when they had a chance.

***Motion Artac, seconded by Ravn, to place the "Blockbuster Free Movie Stand" at Banker's Square.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to begin discussions on waste removal in the future. Wendorf requested this item on the agenda due to the rising costs of waste removal they have experienced throughout the parks over the past several years. Wendorf stated that they provide small dumpsters near all reservable park shelters as well as dumpsters near concession stands for the sports

organizations seasonally and year round dumpsters for the Smith Center and Park Shop. Wendorf said that it is time to look into ways to cut those costs and get creative with our methods. Wendorf informed the Commission that he talked with Street Supervisor Bonack who had some pricing on purchasing our own 2 yard dumpsters for those locations. The costs were in the \$750-800 range per dumpster. By owning our own dumpsters we save significant money but we have to weigh the costs of staffing and equipment from our department and street department. Wendorf also said they discussed using the 96 gallon carts that the City uses for current garbage removal. If we would use these, we would inform shelter renters that once they are full, they are responsible for removing the excess waste on their own. This would pose another challenge in that we would either have to bring those receptacles to a central location to be emptied by the auto garbage truck or create extra stops for them. Wendorf also stated that he will discuss waste removal with the baseball and softball associations as well so that we can get these costs down for our department. Wendorf stated that they don't have to make a decision right away; he just wanted to begin the discussion and problem solving process in hopes of having a plan in place by spring of 2023.

The next item was monthly board report. Wendorf asked if there were any questions. Weix asked about City Forest Timber sale extension and new Sumnicht property. Wendorf said that the extension is fairly common due to the complexity of lumber markets lately. He said that we have a 15% add-on to our contract for a requested extension that the logger is aware of and ok with. Wendorf said that he met with the new WDNR forester at the City Forest to bring him up to speed on the sale and to begin looking at the new property to eventually work into our overall timber sale. Wendorf stated that they are also looking at setting up trail development on that property as well so we might be better served trying to work those two initiatives into the fold at similar times to save money and efforts. Ravn asked about the cameras at Normal Park and if they were working to deter vandalism. Wendorf stated that they had damage to the railing of the Gazebo less than 4 hours after the cameras were installed and it helped us identify the vandals and it has been very quiet there since. Wendorf thanked all of the full time, part time, seasonal staff, Parks & Recreation Commission, City Council, and other departments for helping us create another tremendous year at Parks & Recreation.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for February 1st, 2023 at 4:15 p.m. at the City Hall.

The next item was public comment. Gulke stated that the T.B. Scott Library had an "explorers backpack" donated by the Ice Age Trail that contains items to help explore and enjoy the Ice Age Trail that can be checked out at the Library.

***Motion Ravn, seconded by Artac to adjourn at 5:00 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dan Wendorf
Recording Secretary

12/1/2022

JOHN DEERE	TERRAIN CUT DROP SPREADER	10/12/2022	8592575	\$4,231.45	CAPITAL EXPENSE
AMERICAN WELDING	CYLINDER RENTAL	12/12/2022	BC646	\$116.25	55200-08-91000
AMERICAN WELDING		12/12/2022	BQ929	\$158.52	55200-08-91000
ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION	MEMBERSHIP	12/1/2022		\$25.00	55200-08-92000
ATCO INTERNATIONAL	POP UP SWIPES	12/22/2022	10607309	\$305.30	55400-03-50000
BAJA'S	SHIRTS	12/14/2022	18336	\$354.00	55200-08-91000
BLUEJAY D & M	SIGNS FOR WINTER WONDERLAND	12/19/2022	75	\$120.00	26-55300-03-60022
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/8/2022	4139745807	\$112.13	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/15/2022	4140446398	\$112.13	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	MOPS AND MATS	12/15/2022	4140446304	\$197.21	55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/30/2022	4142001931	\$120.70	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	12/22/2022	4141156425	\$109.57	10-55200-03-46000
CIVIC PLUS	ONLINE REGISTRATIONS	1/25/2023	250165	\$3,150.00	26-55200-08-92000
DAVE'S COUNTY MARKET	CANDY CANES	12/9/2022		\$36.23	26-55300-03-60022
DAWN SMITH	SAMS CLUB RENEWAL	12/2/2022	VOUCHER	\$50.00	55300-03-10000
ETCO	RIVERSIDE RESTROOM	12/31/2022	20834	\$120.64	10-55200-03-50000
INTEGRITY	SPRINKLER SYSTEM	12/21/2022	63706	\$414.00	55400-02-16700
JIM YATES	CLOTHING ALLOWANCE	12/12/2022	VOUCHER	\$168.32	55200-03-46500
KAREN GRUND	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/16/2022	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
KATHY PARKS	SECURITY DEPOSIT	1/4/2022	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
KATHY SHERIDAN	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/27/2022	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
LAURIE KRIEWAUD	SECURITY DEPOSIT	12/12/2022	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
MEGAN MILES	REIMBURSEMENT FOR LIFEGUARD CLASS	12/31/2022		\$80.00	26-45420-48250
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	GORILLA GLUE	12/5/2022	221392	\$5.99	55400-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	IG BLANK CVR	11/29/2022	221138	\$8.37	55200-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	SUPPLIES FOR SHOP	12/11/2022	221518	\$58.85	55200-08-91000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	CORDS AND BATTERIES	12/6/2022		\$59.96	26-55300-03-60022
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	LYSOL	1/3/2022	221973	\$11.98	55400-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	TRASH BAGS, BROOM	12/22/2022	221779	\$46.96	55400-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	FAUCET	12/6/2022	22139	\$77.98	55200-03-50000

1/1/2023

AMERICAN WELDING & GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL	1/4/2023	BQ929	\$80.30	10-55300-03-41500
ALL PARTITIONS & PARTS	RESTROOMS IN PARK	1/23/2023	173291	\$201.00	55200-03-50000
AMAZON	ENMOTION PAPER TOWELS	1/20/2023	112-6998025-7204213	\$287.37	55400-03-50000
AMERICAN WELDING & GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL	1/4/2023	BC646	\$58.82	10-55200-02-15000
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING	1/1/2023		\$94.24	55400-02-23600
BRIDGES VIRTUAL ACADEMY	TAX EXEMPT	1/16/2023	VOUCHER	\$9.38	10-45200-46722
CINTAS	MOPS/MATS	1/12/2023	4143232443	\$197.21	55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	1/12/2023	4143232567	\$109.57	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	1/19/2023	4143923603	\$109.57	55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/Ryan	1/6/2023	4142615373	\$109.57	55200-03-46000
DAVEY RESOURCE GROUP	TREEKEEPER SUBSCRIPTION	1/16/2023	917295524	\$1,800.00	10-55200-08-92000
ENTRANCE TECHNOLOGIES, LLC	PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE	1/17/2023	32117	\$135.00	55400-02-16800
ETCO ELECTRIC SUPPLY	SUPPLIES	1/18/2023	3419112	\$136.16	55200-03-50000
GARRETT HAMEAU	SECURITY DEPOSIT	1/10/2023	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
JO HENRICKSON	SECURITY DEPOSIT	1/10/2023	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	LIGHT BULBS	1/18/2023	222314	\$17.98	10-55400-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	FASTENERS	1/6/2023	222073	\$13.76	10-55200-03-400000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	FILTERS	1/10/2023	222131	\$17.97	10-55400-03-400000
MERRILL FOTO NEW	ADVERTISEMENT	1/1/2023		\$192.00	10-55400-03-41000
MERRILL WATER UTILITY	NORMAL PARK	2/10/2023	336-09740-00	\$405.04	10-55200-02-21000
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	BIRTHDAY PARTY	1/4/2023	171	\$30.00	55300-03-41500
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	PIZZA PARTY	1/14/2023	185	\$200.00	10-55300-03-415000
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	HOT DOG PARTY	1/14/2023	184	\$49.50	10-55300-03-415000
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	PIZZA PARTY	1/23/2023	192	\$75.00	55300-03-41500
NAPA AUTO PARTS	PARTS FOR SHOP	1/7/2023	2711	\$47.54	55400-03-50000
NAPA AUTO PARTS	OIL	1/3/2023	1955	\$13.50	55200-03-50000
R & R SPECIALITIES	BOARD BRUSH/MOTOR	1/11/2023	183013	\$838.55	26-55200-08-92000
R & R SPECIALITIES	BOARD BRUSH BLUE BRISTLES	1/16/2023	183079	\$138.65	55200-03-50000
RACHEL YANKE	SECURITY DEPOSIT	1/17/2023	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
SKATE CITY FAMILY FUN CENTER	SUMMER PLAYGROUND TRIP	1/2/2023	150	\$100.00	55300-03-41500

VICTORY JANITORIAL	FILTERS/VAC BAGS	1/11/2023	127232	\$21.56	10-55400-03-50000
WALMART	TOILET BOWL CLEANER	1/4/2023		\$24.74	10-55400-03-40000
WALMART	BASKETBALLS	1/23/2023		\$9.88	55300-03-41500



City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Department Budgetary Discussion 2023 & Beyond

I am certain that we all understood that the time would come when we had to discuss the status of our current and future budget and how we can navigate the ever changing landscape of municipal budgeting. With the costs of goods and services constantly rising, combined with levy limits and minimal shared revenue, we have reached the point where we need to evaluate our operations. Our overall City budgets have averaged at or around 2% increase over the last few years while the overall price of goods and services has gone up 7%+ in most cases. To put it plainly and simply, we cannot afford to continue to do all of the things we have been doing in the past because the cost of doing normal business has passed us by. It is time to begin budgetary and departmental discussions so that we can adjust what we need to in order to continue our same high level of service and be financially sound.

We are not going to solve this issue in one meeting, or even one year but I have laid out a few ideas that can help us reduce some expenditures right away.

- ✚ Adjust/decrease seasonal staffing levels or hours of service
 - Set smaller cap on Summer Playground – allows for cap on seasonal staff.
 - Immediate savings on expenditures to recreational staffing line item
- ✚ Close Aquatic Center for one day per week
 - Seasonal staff savings one day per week for the entire season
 - Allows one day for maintenance, repairs, restocking, cleaning
 - Less chemical usage
- ✚ Raise fees – Charge users more for what they use - less strain on taxpayers that don't use some of these facilities
 - Shelter reservations
 - Aquatic Center day passes and non-swimmer fees
 - Public skate admission
 - Summer Playground
 - Field usage
 - Player fees
 - All of these have a significant impact on maintenance of our facilities and our fees should more accurately reflect that to offset more of our costs/budget

There are many other ways that we can help alleviate budgetary constraints internally but I believe the focus should be on trying to maintain a level of service as close to what we have grown accustomed to as possible.

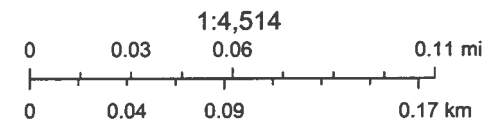
Dan Wendorf – Parks & Recreation Director

City of Merrill



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| City Limit | PLSS Township | Public Roads LG Scale | Parcel PINs |
| Lake and Stream Names | Municipal Boundaries | Town and City | Owner Names |
| PLSS Section | Parcels | | |

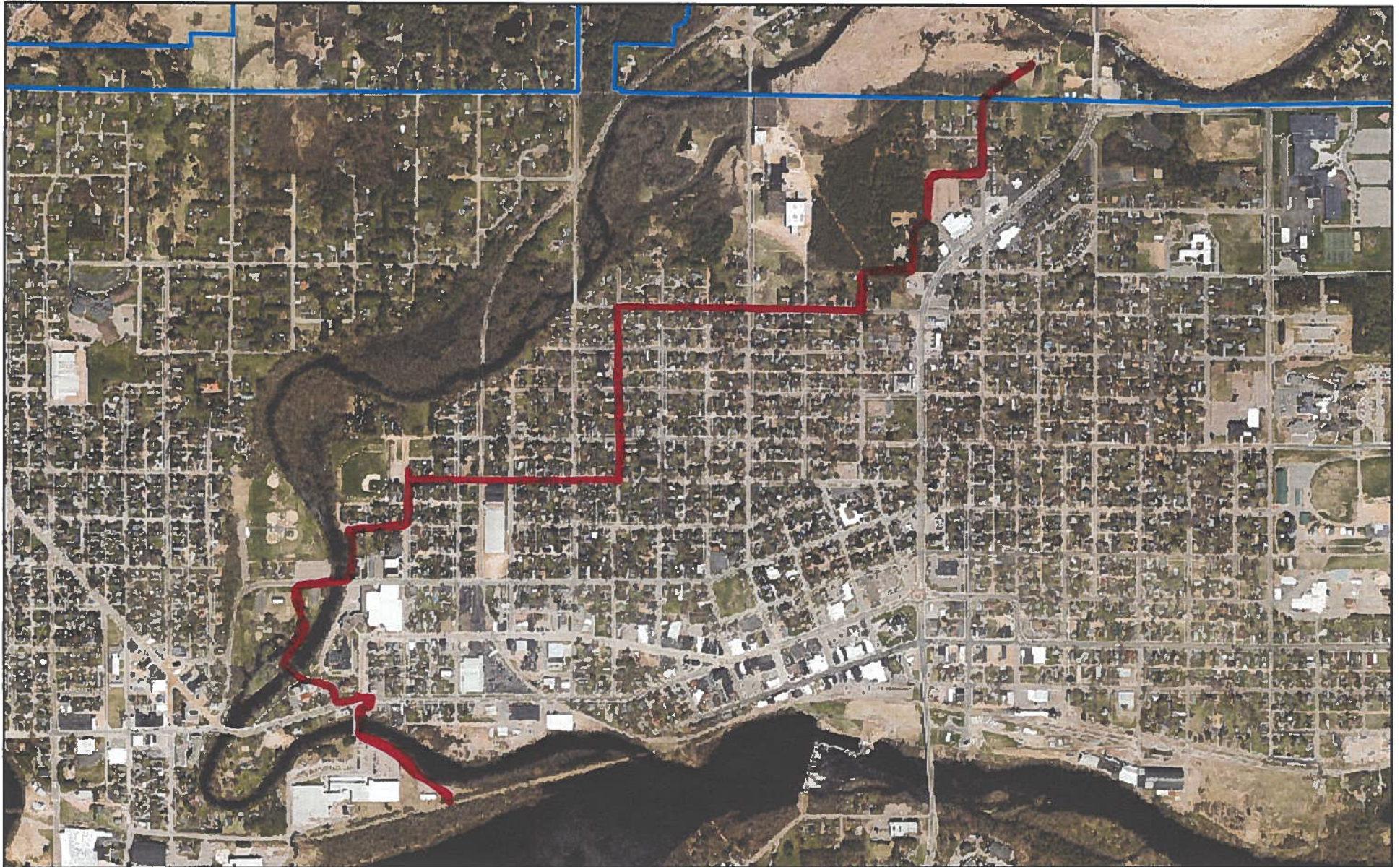


City of Merrill, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA, Lincoln County, WI

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI

1.71 Ac + 6.85 Ac

City of Merrill



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 City Limit

Overall Concept
2023

1:18,056

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 mi

0 0.17 0.35 0.7 km

City of Merrill, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS,
METI/NASA, EPA, USDA

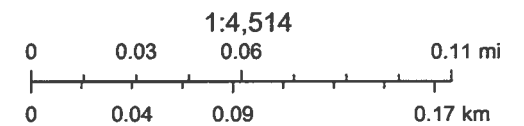
Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI

City of Merrill



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 City Limit



City of Merrill, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, INCREMENT P, USGS, EPA, USDA

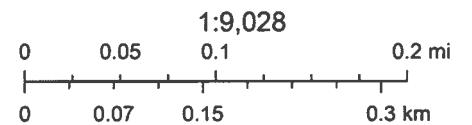
Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI

City of Merrill



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 City Limit



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USGS, MET/NASA, EPA, USDA

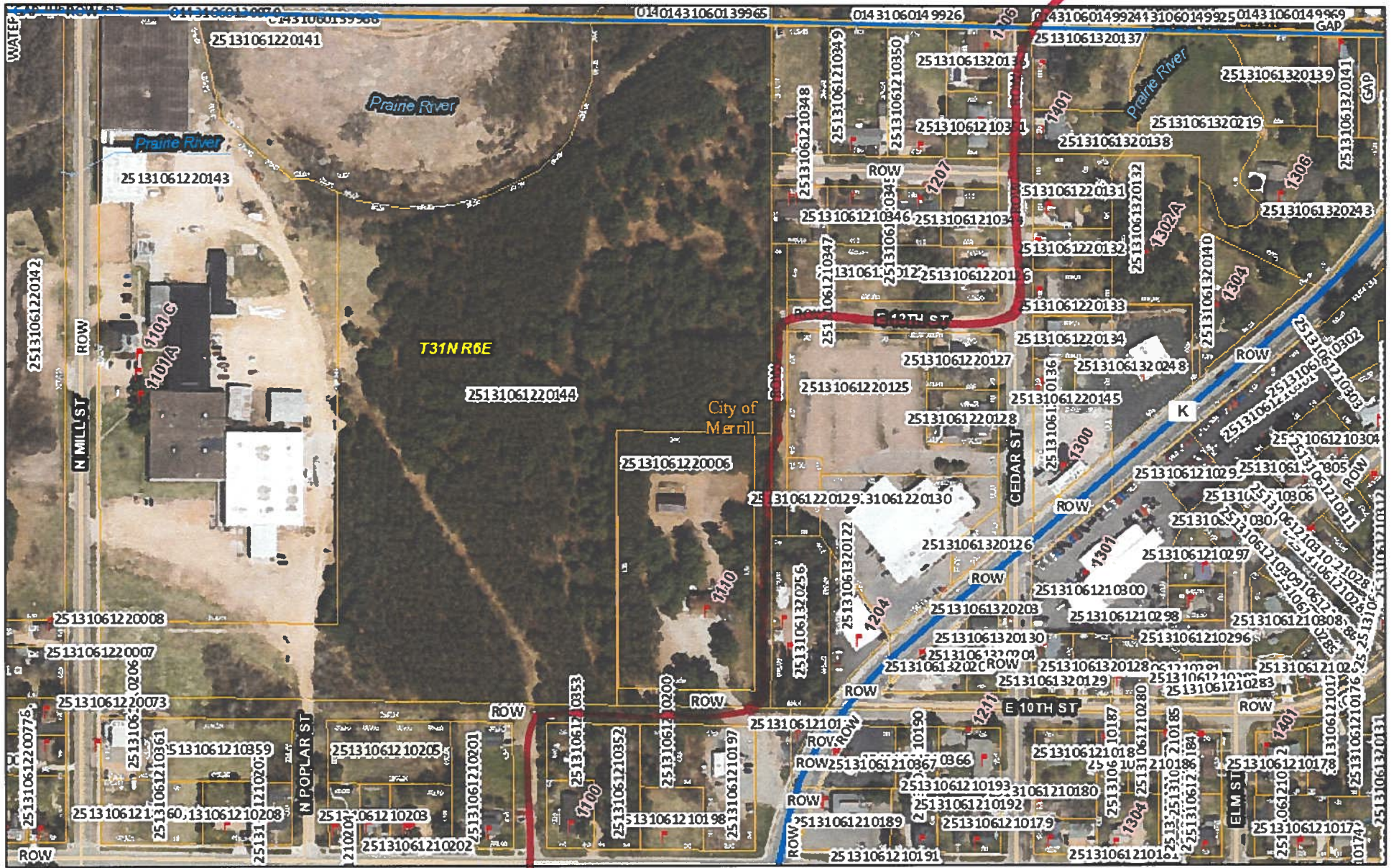
Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood. A red line is drawn on the map, starting from the bottom left, moving horizontally to the right, then vertically upwards, and finally horizontally to the right again, ending with an arrow pointing towards the top right. The area is characterized by a grid of streets, numerous houses, and several large, dark green wooded areas. A baseball field is visible in the bottom left corner.

 City Limit

Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI

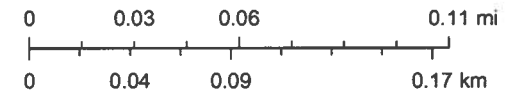
City of Merrill



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|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| City Limit | Perennial Streams | Municipal Boundaries | RAMP | Town and City |
| Tax Parcel Boundary | PLSS Section | Public Roads LG Scale | State Highway | FOREST ROAD GAS-TAX |
| Intermittent Streams | PLSS Township | US Highway | County Highway | |

1:4,514



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Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS
City of Merrill, WI

**CITY OF MERRILL
PERSONNEL & FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, January 24, 2023 - MINUTES**

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Russell, Alderperson Fermanich, Alderperson Caylor

Others Present: Mayor Hass, City Attorney Hayden, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Finance Director Unertl (remote), Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Police Chief Bennett, Library Director Ollhoff, Fire Chief Klug, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel, Stephanie Pagel, Alderperson Lupton, Alderperson Weix, Shari Wicke, Jill Bostrom and Merrill Productions video operator

I. Call to Order – Chairperson Russell called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

II. Vouchers – November and December

Alderperson Caylor questioned a charge for garbage pickup. The question was answered favorably by PWD/CE Akey. Alderperson Fermanich thanked Finance Director Unertl for providing the information she requested. Alderperson Caylor made a motion to approve the vouchers for November and December. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

III. Minutes from previous meeting(s):

A motion was made by Alderperson Fermanich to approve the November 29th Regular and Closed meeting minutes. Alderperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

IV. Agenda Items for Consideration:

1. Review and discuss the 2015 Grant Policy

The Grant Policy was emailed to Alderpersons to review prior to the meeting. Mayor Hass provided a brief history of the policy. Alderperson Caylor stated in the original policy, grants were approved by the Personnel and Finance Committee. It was revised in 2015 to have the City Administrator approve the grant.

After further discussion, and motion revisions, Alderperson Caylor motioned to change the 3rd paragraph in the policy to read; Grants received, that are not considered annual grants, will be reported to Personnel and Finance for approval and acceptance. In addition, grants over \$50,000 will require a final report to Personnel and Finance after the grant is administered. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the revised motion carried. This will be referred to the February Common Council meeting.

2. Consider writing off duplicate 2022 personal property tax bill – Merrill FotoNews

Alderperson Caylor motioned to approve writing off the duplicate 2022 personal property tax bill for Merrill FotoNews. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

3. Request to sell and dispose of 3 squad cars in 2023 via Wisconsin Surplus Auctions
Police Chief Bennett explained the reason for this request. This is the standard request when vehicles are no longer in service.

Alderson Fermanich motioned to approve the request to sell and dispose of 3 squad cars in 2023 via Wisconsin Surplus Auctions. Alderson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

4. Discuss and consider accumulated sick leave payable at retirement

Alderson Fermanich explained the reason for this item on the agenda. Considering budget constraints, this is an item for discussion. Discussion occurred between the committee members, Mayor Hass and Interim City Administrators Akey and Bennett. Alderson Caylor mentioned this is a large unfunded liability. It was decided any change would not affect current employees. Alderson Caylor also stated Lincoln County offers this benefit however; the money can only be applied toward a health plan.

After further discussion it was decided this item would be brought back on the agenda in July for budget discussion.

V. Monthly Reports:

It was suggested going forward; the Mayor and Interim Administrators would have a Monthly Report.

1. Monthly Report – Finance Director Unertl

The Finance Director's report was in the packet.

2. Monthly Report – City Attorney Hayden

The report was in the agenda packet.

3. Monthly Report – City Clerk Anderson-Malm

The report was in the agenda packet.

4. Monthly Report – Municipal Court

The report was in the agenda packet.

5. Consider placing monthly reports on file

Alderson Caylor motioned to place the monthly reports on file. Alderson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

VI. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

VII. Establish date, time and location of next regular meeting

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, February 28 at 6:00 PM

VIII. Adjournment

Aldersperson Fermanich made a motion to adjourn. Aldersperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 PM.

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm – City Clerk



February 2023 Parks & Recreation Director's Report

Parks: We have had some pretty crazy up and down weather over the past few months. The crew had to do a lot of snow removal in the weeks leading up to Christmas and it was very cold. Once we caught up on snow removal, we were able to flood ice rinks pretty consistently to get them set up and ready to skate on for everyone's holiday. Then the warmth came in followed by freezing rain and everything in between. We were able to keep conditions on our outdoor rinks decent throughout the weather swings and they are still functioning well to date. It was really nice to finally have our drop spreader on our small tractor so that we could remove snow and sand/salt at the same time with that piece of equipment. That saved us a lot of time throughout all of the drizzle-type weather we have had over the past several weeks but it is an uphill battle with some of our locations to limit the ice build-up (just like everyone else). We have our Aquatic Center pipe leak fixes set up for this spring with Badger Pool as soon as the weather allows. They will hammer out the area that we believe to be the culprit and fix it right away and re-pour that section so that we can be ready to open the pool. As with anything in northern Wisconsin in the spring, we can't guarantee the weather and we can't guarantee any delays in opening this year. We will guarantee that as soon as weather allows, we will get after it and work tirelessly until it is done and ready. Our stolen flower watering truck transmission has been replaced and the truck is ready to water flowers again this year. We also received the check from the insurance company to cover the damages, minus our deductible. We will be hosting the Badger State Games – Fat Tire Bike Races again at the City Forest on February 11th. As always, we are hoping for increased participation and bringing more visitors into our community. There is also an Ice Age Trail guided hike on February 4th that will take place in and around the City Forest (Ice Age Trail segments) that we are helping promote with our local chapter now that we are an Ice Age Trail Community. Hopefully they get the participation that we had for the fall hikes and our ribbon cutting weekend when we became a member. Being an Ice Age Trail Community is already helping bring visitors into our community! The crew has been working on winter maintenance in between plowing, brooming, and flooding outdoor rinks. This also includes fixing equipment and all of the picnic tables that get damaged during the busy spring/summer/fall seasons in our parks. I have also been working with our City Engineer and a few of my colleagues from other communities to develop our Pickleball specifications for Ott's Park. I am hoping to have this ready to be bid out as soon as possible so that we can review and approve bids at our March meeting and begin making arrangements for summer construction and completion. The Street Department is going to help us with some site prep work so that whoever we contract to perform the work can begin with surfacing. I have been working on the other items remaining on our capital list for this year (connector trail, front mower, and security camera's for Kitchenette and Stange).

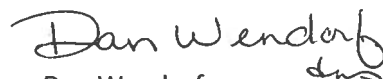
Forestry: I finished our Tree City USA application and submitted it on time before the end of the year. We once again qualify with ease and should find out shortly about our acceptance. The Street Department has been catching up with our tree pruning/removal list when they don't have snow removal to do on the streets. Our logger that informed me that he would like an extension on the

timber sale at the City Forest shortly before our December meeting; he contacted me shortly after and informed me he could do it after all. He began right away and has been working on our timber sale since. He is aware of the events that are coming up over the next several weekends and will make sure to keep the area clean and safe for pedestrians. He should be wrapped up within the next few weeks and we should be all done with that one. He has been doing a very good job with the job and is taking good care of the land while he works. I have also been working with our local WDNR forester on establishing our next timber sale. Most trees have bounced back from the December rain/sleet/snow mix that heavily coated branches and stayed on for several weeks bending tree leaders and branches. Trees are extremely resilient and luckily we should see very few issues with healthy trees bouncing back to form. Obviously the exception will be concern for young trees that were deformed too badly and older trees that had too many broken limbs from the weight of the snow.

Recreation: Little Dribblers began on 1/9/23 and is off to a tremendous start. We have well over 50 children participating this year (which is up from previous years) and we are also very thankful to MHS Boys Basketball Coach Troy Pieper, his staff, and varsity players for participating in the first few weeks of skills and drills! What a unique opportunity for the young players and varsity players to interact and learn and most importantly have fun. Thank you Coach Pieper, staff, and players for working with us to enhance the program! I would like to extend a special thank you to Dawn Smith for her tremendous job with our first Winter Wonderland in December. It went very well for the first time and people really enjoyed it. Hats off to Dawn for pulling this together and making it another success! As always planning is well underway for our busy 2023 spring/summer/fall recreation seasons. There are so many details that go into all of our programs and we like to make sure to have things ready early so we can promote as soon as possible. Ideally, we like to have registrations ready by the time we have our Children's Festival so that we can kick off the season and get people starting to sign up.

Smith Center: Ice is still going full blast in the arena and things have been going well thus far. With the exception of our Zamboni batteries needing to be replaced our usage has been above average so that is good. One of the main reasons why we kept our old LP Zamboni is for instances like this. We can use it if we run into an issue. We ordered new batteries in early December and we received them on 1/26. There was a 6-8 week lag but we were able to manage. The new batteries are supposed to last 7-10 years if cared for properly (our old ones made it 7). I was hoping these would make it through the rest of this season so we could budget for them in 2024 but we had to move that timeline up to now. The electric Zamboni still saves us money (even with battery replacement every 7 years) because of the cost of LP tanks all season long. We have hosted a number of youth and high school tournaments already this season, with more on the way and the Ice Reflections Figure Skating show as well. So we look forward to a very busy remainder of the ice season before we remove the ice and get ready for dry floor events. We do have a really good number of dry floor events scheduled so far for the Smith Center and are hoping to continue that trend.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Wendorf". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small "dms" monogram at the end.

Dan Wendorf
Parks & Recreation Director
City of Merrill