

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

January 6, 2021

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, January 6, 2021 at 4:15 p.m., virtual meeting.

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

Members Excused Absent: Joan Tabor

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: City Administrator Dave Johnson

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

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Groth, to approve the claims from December.

Gulke questioned if the bills were from all year or just from the month of December. Wendorf stated they are just from November and December because we didn't have a December meeting; it just looks different because the city hall did the bills.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion on COVID-19. Wendorf stated that we had a good start to the ice season; unfortunately we did get closed down for a month, but were able to reopen on Dec. 14. Wendorf stated all user groups are helping with sanitizing and everyone is doing their part to keep the building open to the user groups. Wendorf stated that he is confident that we will be able to open the aquatic center and have our summer playground program this summer. It may not look like pre-covid procedures but we want to try and are preparing to do whatever we can to operate. Wendorf stated that he is hopeful that this summer will be better than last summer.

The next item on the agenda was a summary of the 2021 budget. Wendorf stated that he thought everything went very well during the budget process. It was approved to hire another employee starting after June 1, 2021. Wendorf stated that he has started putting together a job description and would like to start promoting the position as soon as possible.

The next item on the agenda was to begin discussion on 2022 and 10 year capital budget. Wendorf sent out the 10 year capital budget goals to commission members and asked that they take a look at the items and determine if anything should be added or what is more important. Ravn requested the curling facility be added back onto the plan. This item will remain on the agenda.

The next item on the agenda is to discuss potentially extending Smith Center ice by a few weeks in spring. Wendorf stated that Merrill Ice Reflections stated that they would like to see ice extended for one to two weeks this year due to the shutdown in November. Wendorf stated that

they have their whole season planned and the shutdown set them back a couple of weeks. Wendorf stated that before we would agree to that we would need to know if we could open up to the public and other user groups, to make it worthwhile. If we can't guarantee ice use for inside and outside organizations it really would not be feasible to keep the ice in longer. Artac stated that he thinks that we will know a lot more in a month and we could make the decision at that time. This item will remain on the agenda.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Wendorf stated that he applied and received a forestry grant and we also qualify for Tree City USA again. Wendorf also stated that he is working on a memorial for Charlie Phelps who was one of the founding fathers of the Smith Center. He will keep the commission updated on that item.

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

Public Comment:

***Motion by Vanlieshout, seconded by Artac to adjourn at 5:10 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary