



CITY OF MERRILL
TOURISM COMMISSION
AGENDA • TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2024

Regular Meeting

Merrill Chamber of Commerce

**12:00
PM**

I. Call to Order

II. Public Comment

III. Minutes from Previous Meeting

1. Review/approve the minutes from the November meetings.

IV. General Agenda Items for Consideration

2. Review of 2024 Budget
 - a. Application for Carry the Cross
3. Discuss 2025 Tradeshow
 - b. Recap on 2024 Tradeshow
4. Grant application deadlines for 2025

V. Set Date and Time for Next Meeting

VI. Adjournment

The Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce is accessible to the physically disadvantaged. If special accommodations are required, please get in touch with the Chamber at 715-536-9474.

Tourism Commission Meeting Review Minutes
November 7, 2023
Held at the Merrill Chamber of Commerce

Members Present: Dan Wendorf, Sue Kunkel, Sara Gilbert, Nate Meyer

Absent: Jeremy Ratliff, Kathy Lezotte

Staff Present: Clyde Nelson, Cheryl Skoug

Others Present: MP3

Called to order: 12:03pm by Dan Wendorf

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes from last meeting reviewed, and a motion to approve meeting minutes as written was made by Sue Kunkel, seconded by Nate Meyer, voted, and carried.

Report that was provided to the Common Council – Holding this meeting to review the 2024 Budget and review 2024 Grant applications. We will not be able to have a complete motion to approve the Budget today, will have to hold another meeting. We did not have enough voting members, for two of the voting members would have reframed from voting at the Lincoln County Fair for their involvement with the Fair.

- Money that did not go out in 2023: Barleyfest (cancelled), Lion's Club Car Show, Merrill Youth Hockey Bantam and Squirt Tournaments did not use all the granted funds.
- In the current budget the amount for Tradeshows is higher because we are going to four different trade shows in 2024 that we had to pay to reserve the booth space.
- We will be attending trade shows in Iowa, Green Bay, Lacrosse, Madison, Tomahawk and possibly the State Fair.
- Still missing is the 3rd Quarter payment from Room Tax. The money will be sent in December.
- 2024 Visitor Guide will be changing to hit on more of the silent (biking, hiking, kayaking, etc.) sports.
- We are following in the State's footsteps by going to Iowa to reach more people to bring them here for vacation.
- The Merrill Chamber is down to 50 visitor guides out of 10,000 that were printed for 2023.
- We have used a local printer for the printing of the visitor guides, but this year we will be using a different printer. The new printer is \$5,000 less than the local printer. No money will be used from the room tax to pay for the guide.

Budget – Numbers for the budget that are presented to the Chamber for the 2024 budget look good but will need to be voted on by more members.

Grant Applications –

- Sled Dogs – This is a unique ever to Merrill. Would like to see them use the funds to advertise outside of the Merrill area. Asking for \$400, suggested grant \$400.
- Lion's Car Show – A lot of their budget goes to printing postcards and posters that get mailed and handed out to past registered participants, and to different shows that are attended. Will need to highly encourage them to hit outside a 50-mile radius. Asking \$1500, suggested grant: \$1200.

- Lincoln County Fair – Lodging is almost always full during the fair. Class & family reunions are happening during this time. Posters that are printed go up around Lincoln County along with the booklets. Money from the grant is not supposed to pay for the general advertising in the Merrill Foto News. They use the WJMT, WJJQ and Midwest Communications for radio advertisers. Off the Clock – is a place that is used to advertise the music that will be at the fair. Will be holding another meeting to review amounts. One of the bigger events for Merrill. Was informed that a public comment was made to one of the commissioners on why does the fair and rodeo get the same amount granted to them? The fair is five days, and the rodeo is 3 days. Do not have enough voting members to vote.
- Wisconsin Pro Rodeo – Another big event in Merrill. Brings a lot of people to our community. Asking for \$20,000, suggested to go with \$16,000 – same as the Fair.
- Merrill Concertina – Great event for the area. Funding used for posters, membership to have been able to advertise on a certain Concertina website. Asking for \$450, granted \$450.
- Underdown Trail Ride – great event. Asking for \$850, granted \$850.
- Black Squirrel Scurry – growing event for silent sports. Asking for \$1,000, granted \$1,000.
- Underdown Fat Bike Races – Badger State Games event in February. Brings a lot of people to our community. Asking \$250, granted \$250.
- Carry the Cross – currently asking for \$1,000 to \$10,000. The commission agrees they cannot grant any money to this application without a plan in place. No information was given about how funds would be used. This application was late to be turned in. Once they can give more information to the commission, if funds are available in 2024, they could reapply.
- Ice Drags- if they have money left over, they donate it to a non-profit in Merrill. Asking for \$5,000, granted \$4,000.
- Question was asked if there is a way to educate the Grantees about using their funds wisely? Maybe we could get the grantees together for a marketing educational meeting through the Chamber. Provide resources for people to contact for advertising outside of Merrill.
- Would like to find out how many rooms are used for the Rodeo and the Fair directly.
- The Chamber will be focus on advertising on silent sports in 2024. The city is adding kayak outlets along the Wisconsin River.
- Will need to have an in-person meeting with the commission to finalize the 2024 Budget and Granted amounts.
- A motion to table the 2024 Grants and budget until next meeting was made by Nate Meyer, seconded by Sarah Gilbert, voted, motion carried.

Next meeting will be TBA but will be held no later than November 15, 2024, at the Merrill Chamber office. Email will be sent out at least 24 hours prior to a meeting.

A motion to adjourn at 1:38pm was made by Sue Kunkel, seconded by Nate Meyer, voted and motion carried.

Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2023
Held at the Merrill Chamber of Commerce

Members Present: Dan Wendorf (via phone), Sue Kunkel, Jeremy Ratliff, Sara Gilbert, Nate Meyer, Gary Schwartz

Absent:

Staff Present: Clyde Nelson(via phone), Cheryl Skoug

Others Present: MP3

Called to order: 3:30pm by Dan Wendorf

Public Comment: No public comment.

Meeting minutes for November 7, 2023 was emailed to all members for their review.

Continue Review of Budget for 2024

Discussion of the 2024 Lincoln County Fair Grant Applications - Sarah made the motion to leave the fair at \$16,000 for granted amount, seconded by Jeremy, voted, and carried.

A motion to accept the 2024 Tourism Budget for \$103,750.00 as reviewed was made by Nate, seconded by Sarah, voted, and carried.

Next meeting will be called by chairperson.

A motion to adjourn at 3:43pm was made by Sue Kunkel, seconded by Jeremy, voted and motion carried.

Cheryl Skoug
Recording Secretary

	<u>Budget</u> <u>2023 Jan-Dec</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2023 Jan-Dec</u>	<u>% of</u> <u>Total</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>2024 Jan-Dec</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>2024 Jan-Dec</u>
Room Tax Collected (1)	\$91,275.00	\$55,820.93		\$105,000.00	\$105,000.00
Promote Festivals & Events	\$40,075.00	\$37,775.24	68%	\$40,150.00	\$1,084.71
Merrill Bantam Hockey Tour	\$500.00	\$250.00 c	1%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Merrill Ice Drags	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	13%	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Doris Lovrine Memorial Slec	\$200.00	\$200.00 c	1%	\$400.00	\$0.00
Lincoln County Fair	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00 c	36%	\$16,000.00	\$0.00
Labor Day Classic Car Show	\$1,250.00	\$950.24 c	3%	\$1,200.00	\$450.90
Concertina Festival	\$225.00	\$225.00	1%	\$450.00	\$450.00
Lincoln Lager Barleyfest	\$1,500.00	\$0.00 c	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo	\$13,500.00	\$13,500.00 c	36%	\$16,000.00	\$0.00
Central Wisc. Bandits Footba	\$750.00	\$750.00 c	2%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Black Squirrel Scurry	\$800.00	\$800.00	2%	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Underdown Trail Ride	\$850.00	\$850.00 c	2%	\$850.00	\$0.00
Merrill Squirt Hockey Tourna	\$500.00	\$250.00	1%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Underdown Fat Bike Races	\$500.00	\$500.00	1%	\$250.00	\$183.81
Carry the Cross (3)	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	3%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Promotions	\$500.00	\$3,132.83		\$8,900.00	\$9,127.49
Other Promotions(4)	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Tradeshows (5)	\$0.00	\$3,132.83		\$7,900.00	\$8,608.49
Visitor's Literature Display	\$500.00	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$519.00
Saving Account	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
Discover Wisconsin	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00	\$0.00
Contingency	\$1,500.00	\$0.00		\$1,500.00	\$0.00
Conferences	\$3,000.00	\$1,305.11		\$3,000.00	\$624.89
Additional Advertising (6)	\$15,000.00	\$24,392.00		\$18,000.00	\$5,820.46
Administration & Rent	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00		\$25,000.00	\$12,500.00
Marketing Support	\$6,200.00	\$5,243.65		\$7,200.00	\$2,926.30

Telephone (800#)	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	\$600.00
Postage (7)	\$2,000.00	\$781.79	\$3,000.00	\$826.30
Website/Computers	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00
GRAND TOTALS	<u>\$91,275.00</u>	<u>\$96,848.83</u>	<u>\$103,750.00</u>	<u>\$32,083.85</u>

\$1,250.00

	date	amount
	4th 3/13/24	17,926.50
	1st	
	2nd	
	3rd	
		<u>17,926.50</u>
	Fwd Bal	80,637.21
	Exp	32,083.85
	Chk bk bal	<u>\$66,479.86</u>

Footnotes

- (1) - Room Tax collected - the \$105,000 projection is based upon City Treasurer Unertl estimate for 2024 (this can be found on page 102 in the City of Merrill's Budget dated 10/15/2023)
- (2) - Promote Festivals and events - this represents requests/applications made in their entirety
- (3) - Carry the Cross was delinquent as to the cutoff date of application and the request ranged from \$1,000 - \$10,000
- (4) - Promotional items needed for booth set up materials - banners, give aways (bags), etc.
- (5) - Tradeshows - this represents the cost of space, hotel, mileage and wages of employees attending.
We have/will registrar for 4 trade shows in 2024 - LaCrosse, WI; Cedar Falls, IA; Madison, WI; Green Bay, WI (through NorthCental Tourism). There is a potential 5th through Travel Wisconsin at the WI State Fair.
In addition to the Tomahawk Sport Show which would be the 6th trade show appearance .
- (6) - Additional Advertising - We advertise in various magazines throughout WI. The reason it's lower is that we are going with a different publisher for the Visitor Guide and will not have to pay the additional \$ for publication
- (7) - Additional postage with the USPS anticipated rate hike and additional distribution of visitor guides



**Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce
Tourism Promotion Application
For Events from January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024**

The Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce, the Merrill Tourism Commission and the City of Merrill have established a program to encourage and promote the expansion of tourism in the Merrill area. Organizations interested in promoting tourism in the Merrill area (this covers Merrill and rural Merrill areas) may apply for assistance in marketing their event to attract visitors from outside our local area, with the purpose to promote tourism and create paid overnight stays.

Applicants are required to disclose their advertising plan, complete organizational budget (not just marketing/advertising) and source of funding when completing this form to be considered for funding. Non-complete forms will not be considered for funding.

This application must be returned by **12:00 Noon on September 1, 2023**, to:
Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce
705 North Center Avenue
Merrill, WI 54452

The Commission reserves the right to deny or modify requests.

Approved applicants will be notified via a letter from the Merrill Chamber of Commerce stating the approved amount and further instructions regarding the allocation of approved dollars. You will be required to help promote the Merrill Area by including the following line on all advertising:
"For Visitor Information call the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce at 715-536-9474 or visit www.merrillchamber.org"

Please call the Chamber with any questions about the application process at 715-536-9474.

Your application must be completed, or it will not be considered for funding.

Name of project or event: Carry The Cross Music Fest

Date of project or event: July 21, 2024

Applicant Organization name: Carry The Cross Co.

Employer ID number: 38-4230468

Mailing address or P.O. Box: N869 Range Line Rd

Physical address (if different from mailing): _____

City: Merrill State: WI Zip: 54452

Organization Phone: 715-297-4237 Fax: _____ Email: Kmschiefelbein1@juno.com

Name/title of person filling out application: Kathy Schiefelbein

Telephone: 715-297-9144 Fax: _____ Email: Kmschiefelbein1@juno.com

Amount of Request: \$1,500 -

Describe event or project and include dates and times: Christian Music at Normal Park, free to the public on Sunday, July 21, 2024 music starts at 3 pm

List your goals of the event or project, including the economic impact it will have on our area: Our goals are to enhance Christianity through music, feeding the hearts + minds of all ages, getting closer to Jesus
Last year we had families from Illinois + Indiana here to see Rhett Walker.

Please list the number of projected overnight stays that your event will generate: Hopefully hundreds

Present last year's **complete** financial information for the event which shows your expenses and income from the previous year. If this is a new event, list your 2024 proposed financial information. **This information must be included to be considered for funding:**

Attached

Present your advertising plan, including the types of media used and their costs. Also, indicate how you plan to use the funds you are requesting. (Keep in mind your request needs to be used to attract out of town visitors and to generate **overnight stays**):

89.0 Radio \$750 WJFW - \$1,300 - (Channel 12) 88.5 Radio \$500 -
Foto News/Multi Media Channels - \$400 - Posters - \$200, Flyers - \$100 -

Advertising on social media.

If necessary, attach any other information.

- **We are requiring your complete/entire budget for the event you are requesting funding for in this round. In the past we only required your complete marketing/advertising plan. Due to the competitiveness of this grant, we must now see the entire budget for the event. Without it, your application will not be reviewed by the commission.**

2024 PROJECT Costs

Carry the Cross					
Project Name: Carry the Cross Music in the Park 2024					
PROJECT EXPENSES	Amount				Total
Consumed by Fire (Band)	\$7,500.00				
Brian Hayes-Sound/Drums & Amps	\$900.00				
Insurance	\$100.00				
Printing/Promotion/Ads/Posters	\$800.00				
Radio 89Q, 88.5 Ads	\$1,250.00				
TV ads WJFW	\$1,300.00				
Instrument Rental	\$300.00				
Meeting/Travel	\$200.00				
Park Rental	\$60.00				
Other Project Expenses Thank you c	\$100.00				
Aerial photographer/photos	\$200.00				
Food/Beverages	\$340.00				
Total Expenses					\$13,050.00
SOURCES OF PROJECT REVENUE	Secured Funding	Funding Applied For			Total
The Merrill Foundation		\$1,000.00	=	\$1,000.00	
Other Foundations		\$1,500.00	=	\$1,500.00	
Corporations		\$2,000.00	=	\$2,000.00	
Individuals/Businesses	\$3,250.00	\$3,500.00	=	\$6,750.00	
Government Grants		\$1,500.00	=	\$1,500.00	
Umbrella Organization			=	\$0.00	
Contracts			=	\$0.00	
Other Project Revenue (<i>concessions</i>)		300	=	\$300.00	
TOTAL PROJECT REVENUE					\$13,050.00

2023 Carry the Cross expense sheet

Date	Description	CK #	Total	office exp	Production	Ads/requests	Misc exp	concession
11/01/22	Check printing		\$28.00	\$28.00				
01/25/23	City of Merrill-park rental	1101	\$110.00		\$110.00			
	Reindl Printing	1102	\$310.00			\$310.00		
02/04/23	Brian Haines	1103	\$250.00		\$250.00			
03/05/23	Greg Oliver Agency	1104	\$5,500.00		\$5,500.00			
03/06/23	Frances Dean Insurance		\$92.50				\$92.50	
03/07/23	VIP	1105	\$43.00			\$43.00		
07/28/23	Reindl Printing	1106	\$210.00			\$210.00		
08/11/23	Greykowski Distributing	1107	\$78.80					\$78.80
	Walker Touring LLC	1108	\$5,980.00		\$5,980.00			
	void	1109						
	void	1110						
	King's Conquest	1111	\$500.00		\$500.00			
	Brian Haines	1112	\$250.00		\$250.00			
09/20/23	89Q Radio	1113	\$500.00			\$500.00		
	MMC LLC-Foto News	1114	\$455.00			\$455.00		
	88.5 The Family Radio	1115	\$400.00			\$400.00		
	WIFW- TV 12	1116	\$1,600.00			\$1,600.00		
	WJFW-TV 12 pictures	1117	\$32.00			\$32.00		
	Total Expenses		\$16,339.30	\$28.00	\$12,590.00	\$3,550.00	\$92.50	\$78.80

Carry the Cross Co Income 2023

Date	Description	Total	interest	donations
10/24/23	Concessions 22/tips	\$1,120.25	\$1,120.25	
10/31/22	interest	\$0.02		\$0.02
11/30/22	interest	\$0.09		\$0.09
12/30/22	interest	\$0.27		\$0.27
01/31/23	interest	\$0.45		\$0.45
02/14/23	J & K Schiefelbein donation	\$10,000.00		\$10,000.00
02/21/23	Amax-Imo Realtors	\$200.00		\$200.00
	Brickners	\$100.00		\$100.00
02/28/23	interest	\$2.19		\$2.19
03/15/23	American Family Insurance	\$100.00		\$100.00
	MLD	\$100.00		\$100.00
03/23/23	Merrill Foundation	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
	Cental Carpet	\$100.00		\$100.00
03/31/23	interest	\$3.85		\$3.85
04/04/23	NAPA	\$50.00		\$50.00
04/28/23	interest	\$2.47		\$2.47
05/31/23	interest	\$2.91		\$2.91
06/15/23	Volm Bag	\$250.00		\$250.00
06/30/23	Nicolet Bank	\$300.00		\$300.00
	interest	\$2.71		\$2.71
07/31/23	interest	\$2.97		\$2.97
08/14/23	Geiss Meat	\$300.00		\$300.00
	HCE	\$300.00		\$300.00
	Unnamed individual	\$400.00		\$400.00
	Concessions 23/tips	\$986.66	\$986.66	
08/17/23	Lokre	\$3,001.00		\$3,001.00
08/31/23	interest	\$2.64		\$2.64
09/21/23	return deposit for park	\$50.00	\$50.00	
09/30/23	interest	\$1.81		\$1.81
10/17/23	Chamber of Commerce	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
	Totals	\$19,380.29	\$2,156.91	\$17,201.00