

**CITY OF MERRILL
TOURISM COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2024 MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING MERRILL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 12:00 PM**

- I. **Call to Order** The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by Dan Wendorf
Present: Parks Director Wendorf, Kunkel, Alderperson Weix Jr.
Excused: Gary Schwartz and Sarah Gilbert
Staff Present: Clyde Nelson, Cheryl Skoug, Sarah Sturm
Others present: Alderperson Lass and Merrill Community Media
- II. **Public Comment** Bob Lass has talked with the Airport Commission and has suggested they bring back an Antique Airplane Event. Merrill Airport is the finishing line for the race in July.
- III. **Minutes from Previous Meeting**
 1. **Review/approve the minutes from the November meetings.** - reviewed, and a motion to approve meeting minutes as written was made by Sue Kunkel, seconded by Mark Weix, voted, and carried.
- IV. **General Agenda Items for Consideration**
 2. **Review of 2024 Budget** - Clyde reports the money spent in 2023 – Tradeshows, Additional Advertising, and Conferences.
 - Additional Advertising – Close Publications is paid a year in advance.
 - Tradeshows – we must pay fees upfront to lock our spot.
 - 2024 Budget – the budget is money that could come in from Room Tax for the year. The commission produced \$105,000 for the year 2024.
 - The State Fair is coming up on August 4th. The Chamber will be going to work at a booth with Travel Wisconsin. If you would like to attend, please let us know. We will be handing out Visitor Guides and bags.
 - Cedar Falls, Iowa we had 250 people registered for our giveaway. At LaCrosse, we had 350, and Madison we had 350 people registered.
 - The Chamber ended up paying the wages for the employees to attend this year. The cost that was projected did not cover enough for wages.
 - Visit Merrill Banners were ordered to be displayed at shows.
 - a. **Application for Carry the Cross** - Carry the Cross -submitted a new application with completed information on the application. They were asking for \$1,500. Review their budget and how money was spent on advertising. All applications reviewed in November had a 25% cut in asking amounts. Sue Kunkel motioned to grant them \$1,000, seconded by Mark Weix, voted, and the motion carried.

3. Discuss 2025 Tradeshows - The Chamber plans to attend the same shows as last year but adding Duluth. We are working with Merrill House of Music to get a TV for pictures and videos of outdoor recreation. Lincoln County is working with a company that will be supplying pictures and videos that can be linked to websites

b. Recap on 2024 Tradeshows -

- In 2024, the Chamber worked with 5-Star Marketing, and Merrill Foto News to get the Visitor Guides out around the State.
- 2025 – the Chamber will be using Foto News, Kwik Trip, and LaCrosse Graphics to get the Visitors Guide distributed around the state.
- The State of Wisconsin shares data on how numbers they produce Tourism.
- Tourism has a huge impact on the State of Wisconsin. Clyde shared information on the data.

Lincoln County pays for membership for North Central Wisconsin Tourism (formerly known as ITBEC) and Clyde is the current Chairperson of this group. The Merrill Chamber has received at least seventy requests for information from this group.

NFL Draft – Clyde is getting together with the three hotels to put a plan together. Aderperson M. Caylor has talked to Clyde regarding getting a shuttle to run between Merrill and Green Bay.

4. Grant application deadlines for 2025 -

- 2025 Application change: have the group advertising provide their actual budget including where the advertising money is used. If a new event needs to supply a projected budget including where they plan to use advertising money. Make it known by groups that this is needed. Applications will go out on August 12, 2024, and be due on September 20, 2024.

V. Set Date and Time for Next Meeting Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at noon at the Merrill Chamber office.

VI. Adjournment A motion to adjourn at 12:57 pm was made by Sue Kunkel, seconded by Mark Weix, voted and the motion carried.

Minutes recorded by Cheryl Skoug and published by City Clerk Anderson-Malm