

**CITY OF MERRILL
COMMON COUNCIL
TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025 MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS 6:30 PM**

- I. Call to Order** Mayor Hass called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
D1 Alderperson A. Caylor, D2 Alderperson M. Caylor, D3 Alderperson Meyer, D4 Alderperson Fermanich, D5 Alderperson Holdorf, D6 Alderperson Rick, D7 Alderperson Weix Jr., D8 Alderperson Rutkowski
Present: City Administrator Akey, Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel, Enrichment Center Director Mrachek (remote), Finance Director Ley, Fire Chief Klug, Library Director Ollhoff, Parks & Recreation Director Wendorf, Police Chief Bennett, Street Superintendent Bonack, Transit Director Brummond (remote), Utility Operations Manager Steinagel, City Attorney Hayden, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Pastor Justin Smoot, Jay Schleuter, John Geiss, Merrill Community Media.
- II. Invocation - Pastor Justin Smoot - Our Saviors Lutheran Church**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance**
- IV. Roll Call** Roll call was taken. All eight Alderpeople were in attendance.
- V. Common Council Meeting Expectations**
- VI. Public Comment** There was no public comment.
- VII. Minutes from Previous Meeting**
 - 1. Consider placing the minutes from the March 11th meeting on file -** (D3 Alderperson Meyer/D7 Alderperson Weix Jr.) The motion passed.
- VIII. Revenue and Expense Reports**
 - 1. Discuss and consider the March Revenue ad Expense Report -** (D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D3 Alderperson Meyer) The motion passed.
- IX. General Agenda Items for Consideration**
 - 1. Employee Recognition:**
Brad Wirt - Merrill Water Utility - 10 years - Brad Wirt was recognized for his service to the City.
 - 2. Information regarding the memorandum of understanding regarding Geiss, Inc. connection of sewer mains and related issues - City Administrator/City Engineer/Board of Public Works Director - Akey -** City Administrator Akey presented the MOU regarding Geiss Inc and the City of Merrill and answered questions from the council. Following a brief discussion, (D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motioned/seconded to approve the MOU as presented. The motion passed.
- X. Board of Public Works**

1. **Discuss and consider the updated Street Opening permit. The Board of Public Works recommends approval.** - (D1 Alderperson A. Caylor/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to approve. The motion passed.

XI. Fairgrounds Committee

1. **Discuss and consider the Expo Center kitchen rental fee for future events. The Fairgrounds Committee recommends approval.** - (D7 Alderperson Weix Jr./D5 Alderperson Holdorf) Motion/second to approve. For clarification, the motion from the Fairgrounds Committee was to charge \$50.00 for the kitchen rental but keep the security deposit of \$500.00 to rent the Expo building. Following discussion, the motion passed.

XII. Health & Safety

1. **Discuss and consider a temporary class B beer license for the Lincoln County Rodeo Association at the Merrill Fairgrounds, 2001 E 2nd Street on June 6, 7, 8, 2025 in conjunction with the Wisconsin River Pro Rodeo. The Health & Safety Committee recommends approval.** - (D6 Alderperson Rick/D7 Alderperson Weix Jr.) Motion/second to approve. The motion passed.
2. **Discuss and consider a temporary class B beer license for the Lincoln County Fair Association at the Merrill Fairgrounds, 2001 E 2nd St, on August 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, 2025, from 12:00 pm - 12:00 am, in conjunction with the Lincoln County Fair. The Health & Safety Committee recommends approval.** - (D6 Alderperson Rick/D5 Alderperson Holdorf) Motion/second to approve. The motion passed. D3 Alderperson Meyer abstained.

XIII. Ordinances

1. **An Ordinance amending Chapter 18, Article II, Section 18-22 Changes in Budget** - City Attorney Hayden read the Ordinance (D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motion/second to suspend the rules and give the ordinance the second and third readings by title only. City Attorney Hayden gave the Ordinance the second and third readings by title only. (D3 Alderperson Meyer/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to adopt the ordinance. The motion passed on an 8/0 roll call vote.

XIV. Personnel & Finance

1. **Discuss and consider ten budget amendment requests. The Personnel & Finance Committee recommends approval.** - (D3 Alderperson Meyer/D2 Alderperson M. Caylor) Motion/second to approve as presented. The motion passed.

XV. Acknowledge Committee Reports

1. **Consider acknowledging the following committee reports: Transit Commission, Library Board, Endowment Fund Committee, Airport Commission, Marketing & Communications, Enrichment Center, Health**

& Safety, Personnel & Finance, Board of Public Works, Parks & Recreation Commission, and Fairgrounds Committee. - (D1 Alderperson A. Caylor/D6 Alderperson Rick) Motion/second to acknowledge the reports. The motion passed.

XVI. Resolutions

1. **A Resolution in support of reauthorization of state funding for the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.** - City Attorney Hayden read the following Resolution:

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF REAUTHORIZATION OF STATE FUNDING FOR KNOWLES-NELSON STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Legislature created the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program in 1989 to preserve valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and fisheries, and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation. Per Ch. 23 .09 I 5(2c)(d), Wis. Stats.; and

WHEREAS, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is set to expire in 2025 and the program has supported land acquisition and capital development by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), local governments, and nonprofit conservation organizations to preserve valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and expand outdoor recreation for public benefit around the state; and

WHEREAS, the City of Merrill has directly benefited over the years, having received numerous Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grants; and

WHEREAS, the City of Merrill is a designated Ice Age Trail Community, which understands the importance of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail in driving visitation to its community and supports efforts to complete the Trail, which will require stewardship funding; and

WHEREAS, the Merrill Common Council considers the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program a valuable tool to preserve and restore natural areas, wildlife habitat, and water quality while supporting the development of public nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities that promote economic development and enhance quality of life, including the Ice Age National Scenic Trail; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the City of Merrill to express its support of the reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program in 2025 with sufficient funding allocated to fund projects over the next 10 years to our State Legislators and the Governor.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Merrill Common Council does hereby express to the Wisconsin Legislature and Governor our full support for the reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and request that sufficient funding be allocated to support projects over the next 10-year period.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Merrill Common Council directs that the City Clerk forward a copy of this resolution to the offices of each of our State Legislators and the Office of the Governor.

(D7 Alderperson Weix/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motion/second to approve. The motion passed.

2. **A Resolution supporting improvements to Highway 107** - City Attorney Hayden read the following Resolution:

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS TO HIGHWAY 107

WHEREAS, the City of Merrill and the surrounding area are blessed with the River Bend Trail, an amenity that has provided, and will provide for generations to come, a healthy, wholesome and economical recreational asset; and,

WHEREAS, physical improvements to Highway 107, specifically, an expanded, paved highway "shoulder area" would benefit bicyclists and pedestrians by increasing safety, improving traffic flow, enhancing user comfort, all to the benefit of the cycling and general pedestrian population, as well as boosting local economies and connecting Northwoods communities through increased Trail usage;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN COMMON COUNCIL on this 8th day of April 2025, does hereby go on record as supporting a paved expansion of the shoulder area of Highway 107, specifically from Merrill to Tomahawk, allowing safe pedestrian walking, hiking and biking opportunities along scenic State Highway 107.

(D5 Alderperson Holdorf/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to approve. The motion passed.

- XVII. Mayor's Appointments** (D3 Alderperson Meyer/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) Motion/second to approve. D3 Alderperson Meyer recommended Gene Bebel's name be corrected. D7 Alderperson Weix wanted to acknowledge Dan Novitch, Nancy Kwiesielewicz and Norm Hanson for their service. Mayor Hass stated they would be recognized, and an appreciation letter would be sent. The motion passed.

1. **Discuss and consider the following Mayor's Appointments:**
Trisha Kubichek to the Park and Recreation committee replacing Dan Novitch term to expire 5-1-2029
Mark Zulliger to the Police and Fire Commission replacing Norm Hanson term to expire 5-1-2030
Reappoint Mike Giesler to the Library Board term to expire 5-1-2028
Reappoint Sue Kunkel to the Transit Commission term to expire 5-1-2028
Reappoint Denise Ziech to the Transit Commission term to expire 5-1-2028
Appoint Brady Loos to the Transit Commission term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Jeremy Thompson to the Zoning Board term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Eric Dayton to the Zoning Board term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Ryan Schwartzman to the Zoning Board term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Dan Schneider to Community Development Committee term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Chris Malm to the Community Development Committee term to expire 5-1-2028

Appoint Konnor Beyer to the Community Development Committee replacing Nancy Kwiesielewicz. Term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Elizabeth McCrank to the Historic Preservation Committee term to expire 5-1-2028

Reappoint Sue Kunkel to the Tourism Commission term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Sara Gilbert to the Tourism Commission term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Gary Schwartz to the Tourism Commission term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Jay Tlusty to the Enrichment Center committee term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Carol Holz to the Enrichment Center committee term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Elizabeth McCrank to the Enrichment Center committee term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Sharon Harvey to the Enrichment Center committee term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Gene Bebe! to the Enrichment Center committee term to expire 5-1-2026

Reappoint Laura Bertagnoli to the Enrichment Center committee term to expire 5-1-2026

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XVIII. Mayor's Communications Mayor Hass read the following communications:

April 12th - Stop by the Merrill Historical Society and see the new exhibit, Chatter from Left Field, celebrating Merrill Lady Cardinals and Merrill Rangers teams of the past. Mayor Hass will be throwing the first pitch on April 12th.

April 24th through April 26th - NFL draft will be in Green Bay. See the Chamber website for more information.

May 7th - the Board of Review will take place in the Council Chambers starting at 3:30 pm.

May 17th - the community-wide garage-sale event

May 17th - the 2nd Annual Food Truck-a-palooza will be held at the Fairgrounds

T. B. Scott Library events:

April 6th - April 12th is National Libraries week.

April 12th at 2:00 pm Learn how to use your iPhone and iPad

April 14th at noon Learn how to use your iPhone and iPad

State Park one-day passes are available

A seed library is at the library; stop in to see what it's all about!

Merrill Enrichment Center events:

Check out their website and see the monthly flier with all the activities that happen there.

XIX. Adjournment (D3 Alderperson Meyer/D1 Alderperson A. Caylor) Motion/second to adjourn. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori L Anderson-Malm - City Clerk

The minutes are in draft form until approved at the next scheduled meeting. Meeting minutes are available in the City Clerk's office and on the City of Merrill website. Complete Ordinances are available on the City of Merrill website. <https://www.ci.merrill.wi.us>