

**CITY OF MERRILL  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2025 MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS 4:15 PM**

- I. **Call to Order** Chairperson Krueger called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.
- II. **Consider approving minutes from the previous meeting**
  1. **August 2025 Minutes** - ( Osness/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second place minutes on file. The motion Passed.
- III. **Approval of Claims**
  1. **August 2025 Claims** - Rutkowski asked Wendorf what the "P" items from the Street Department are. Wendorf informed her that it is an internal code for park equipment and vehicles that the Street Department uses to identify our equipment that they work on.  
  
( Osness/ Gulke) motion/second approve. The motion passed.
- IV. **General Agenda Items for Consideration**
  1. **Consider and potentially approve 2026 Capital Budget request** - Wendorf began the discussion by summarizing the discussion from the August Meeting and pointing out the changes that were made after last month's meeting. Wendorf stated that he removed the items that were requested and made the necessary revisions. Wendorf stated that in looking at the list, he would recommend removing priority items 5 and 6 (Smith Center Parking Lot and Smith Center Sound System) to future years as they are definitely needed but not a major priority for this year. Wendorf stated that by trimming the request list down to these 5 items it gets us under \$100,000. Wendorf stated that the remaining items on the list are repeat requests or were partially funded last year and would really like to see those completed so we can move on with new requests next year. Osness asked if there are any large ticket items on capital next year or in the near future because he wanted to make sure we try and space larger requests out to increase our odds for funding. Wendorf stated that we will make those efforts each year when we do our capital planning. Wendorf also stated that Badger Pool winterized on August 28th and inspected the plaster spots and haven't submitted a price for the new area yet. He is expecting that very soon and is hoping that fits within the operating budget line item that was added last year to allow for plaster work before the season began. He also stated that the sand in the filters should be able to make it at least one more season and will work to find ways to do it as cost effective as possible when the time comes.

\*Osness made the motion to approve the Capital Request to remove priority items number 6 & 7 and to move Aquatic Center Pumps up to priority item 2\*

( Osness/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second approve. The motion Passed.

- 2. Recap of 2025 Summer Playground Program** - Wendorf summarized the Summer Playground season for the Commission, informing them that Summer Playground went very well this year. He said that the program averaged between 48-49 participants per day throughout the summer and there were very few behavioral issues. He said that by setting the tone early and remaining consistent, it really helped everyone understand that our rules will be enforced and there would be very little tolerance for poor behavior. He thanked the leaders for their great job all summer.

## **V. Monthly Reports**

- 1. September 2025 Director's Report** - Wendorf asked if there were any questions on his report. Hearing none, he summarized the report and went on to inform the Commission that he was informed that the bridge project to connect Prairie Dells County Park to our City Forest was going to begin next week, Tuesday (9/9). He spoke with Dean Bowe from Lincoln County and the two of them will be going up to the City Forest on Friday to do some prep work and make sure things are ready for the project to begin. Wendorf also informed the Commission that the MARC Ballfield Lighting Project is progressing very well and is ahead of schedule. He said that all the lights have been erected and Van Ert is finishing backfeeding all the in-ground wires to each pole and will finish with tying all the wires into the new electrical service on the south side of the concession building. Wendorf stated that the final portion of the process is to test the lights and re-aim any heads that need re-aiming to make sure our lumen levels are as promised on all fields. Wendorf also stated that the Aquatic Center had a very successful season despite very tough weather in June. He said initial reports show well over 11,000 visitors at the pool. It is great to see over 10,000 visitors because without the Aquatic Center, thousands of those visitors would not have a reason to visit our beautiful community. Wendorf then thanked all full and seasonal employees for a tremendous and busy summer season, as well as sponsors, volunteers, and participants, as our success isn't possible without their help.

## **VI. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

- 1. The next regularly scheduled meeting is October 1st, 4:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Merrill City Hall -**

**VII. Public Comment** Commissioner Gulke spoke to inform the public about the Ice Age Trail's "Mammoth Hike Challenge" and encouraged everyone to take part in the unique opportunity to experience as we are an "Ice Age Trail Community." He described what the Challenge is and how it can benefit the participants as well as the community.

**VIII. Adjournment** ( Gulke/ Kubichek) motion/second adjourn. The motion Passed.

