

**CITY OF MERRILL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 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 pm
Present: Mayor Hass, 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 Not Voting: City Administrator Akey, Finance Director Ley, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Enrichment Center Director Mrachek, Facilities Maintenance Manager Brunett, Fire Chief Klug, Information Technology Manager Brown, Park & Recreation Director Wendorf, Police Chief Bennett, Street Superintendent Bonack, Transit Director Brummond (remote), Utility Operations Manager Steinagel, Allen Wix, Vicki Gaedtke, Stephanie Zoellner
- II. **Roll Call** Roll call was taken with all 9 in attendance.
- III. **Public Comment** There was no public comment.
- IV. **General Agenda Items for Consideration**
 1. **Consider approving the minutes from the October 14th meeting.** - (D6 Alderperson Rick/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to place minutes on file. The motion passed.
 2. **Review & Discuss 2026 Proposed Budget** - Finance Director Ley explained an error found and corrected. This is on Page 17 of the packet; the packet was not re-printed. After discussion the following motions were made regarding the 2026 budget:
 - (D4 Alderperson Fermanich/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motion/second to remove the training division chief from the budget and move to a future Committee of the Whole for further discussion in 2026. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.
 - (D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to place the Taser annual subscription into the budget. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.
 - (D1 Alderperson A. Caylor/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motion/second to add items #1 and #2; Unitrends Cloud-offsite backup and Cisco WebEx phone licensing to the 2026 budget. The motion passed on a 5/4 roll call vote. Alderperson's M. Caylor, Holdorf, Rutkowski and Mayor Hass voted no.
 - (D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D6 Alderperson Rick) motion/second to remove the MEC non-capital equipment replacement from the list. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.
 - (D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to remove line item #6; Increase MEC assistant +4 hours to 32/wk from the list. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.
 - (D6 Alderperson Rick/D2 Alderperson M. Caylor) motion/second to remove line item #7; MARC non-capital equipment replacement from the list. The

motion passed on a 7/2 roll call vote. Alderperson's Meyer and Rutkowski voted no.

(D4 Alderperson Fermanich/D2 Alderperson M. Caylor) motion/second to send the Housing Developer Grant to the RDA for further discussion and remove it from the list. The motion passed on a 6/3 roll call vote.

Alderperson's Rick, Weix and Rutkowski voted no.

(D6 Alderperson Rick/ D1 Alderperson A. Caylor) motion/second to remove the Merrill Fairgrounds contingency from the list. The motion passed on an 8/1 roll call vote. Alderperson Meyer voted no.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to remove the Council wages from the budget. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D6 Alderperson Rick) motion/second to adjust the Mayor's wages to \$35,000 from \$25,000 effective after the April 2026 election. The motion failed on a 4/5 roll call vote. Alderperson's Meyer, Fermanich, Holdorf, Weix and Mayor Hass voted no.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D6 Alderperson Rick) motion/second to replace the city signs - outside City Hall and defer the signs on 64 E & W. The motion was withdrawn.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D6 Alderperson Rick) motion/second to defer the City signs to Marketing. The motion passed on an 8/1 roll call vote with Alderperson Fermanich voting no.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motion/second to keep the Expo stove replacement. The motion passed on a 6/3 roll call vote.

Alderperson's Holdorf, Rick and Rutkowski voted no.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to eliminate the Street Commissioner position. The motion passed on an 8/1 roll call vote. Alderperson Rick voted no.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D4 Alderperson Fermanich) motion/second to remove the voting machines for \$8,000 from the budget. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.

(D6 Alderperson Rick/D2 Alderperson M. Caylor) motion/second to remove the Garage and Aquatic Center contingency accounts from the budget. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.

(D2 Alderperson M. Caylor/D6 Alderperson Rick) motion/second to forward the budget to Council for the public hearing. The motion passed on a 9/0 roll call vote.

- V. Adjournment** (D6 Alderperson Rick/D3 Alderperson Meyer) motion/second to adjourn. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Minutes submitted by City Clerk Anderson-Malm

Minutes are in draft form until approved at the next scheduled meeting