

Merrill Enrichment Center Committee

Thursday October 16th, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

MEC Conference Room 303 N. Sales Street 2:15pm

Present: Laura Bertagnoli (Chair), Gene Bebel,
Sharon Harvey, Jay Tlusty, Carol Holz, Elizabeth McCrank,
Jennifer Clark (ADRC representative), **Absent:** Mark Weix (Alderperson)

Agenda

I. **Opening (2:15)**

Bertagnoli called the meeting to order.

II. **Consent Items**

- a. Motion by McCrank second by Holz to approve Aug '25 minutes. Motion carried.
- b. Motion by Tlusty second by McCrank to approve Aug-Oct '25 vouchers.

III. **Public Comment**

Director shared that Pine Crest reached out to inquire about the possibility of using our bus for resident outings. Tlusty & McCrank asked about funding. Director is open to the idea under certain guidelines which include the following; the driver must be a city employee, all costs incurred would be paid by Pine Crest. The Merrill-Go-Round was suggested as an option for Pine Crest. Holz stated that they may want to travel outside of the limits of that option. Director will talk to Transit Director to see if any part-time or retired drivers may be willing to drive our bus for these outings. Director will soon be discussing this further with the coordinator at Pine Crest.

IV. **ADRC**

- a. Bone & Joint will offer a one-time Fall Prevention event on November 13th from 10-11:30 at the Lincoln County Service Center. Pre-registration is required.
- b. Clark also shared the success of the first Gather at the Table pop-up site for senior dining, which was held at the TB Scott Free Library. The meal was catered by Les & Jims, and transportation within City limits was free for seniors 60+. The meal must meet specific criteria defined by the ADRC Nutrition Director. The suggested contribution is \$6. There did not appear to be volunteers needed. The MEC is considering being a site for these gatherings.
- c. Bebel asked Clark if she could provide direction to people on who to contact for the open enrollment and changes to the prescription drug program which is open from Oct 15th – Dec 7th.

V. **Operations**

a. **Events Recap**

- i. Clark shared the success of the first Prevent Falls Resource Fair which was funded by Aspirus Health. It was a wonderful collaborative effort between the ADRC, MEC, Aspirus, and Lincoln County. We were pleased that 60 people attended this first interactive event. People were able to participate in learning how to get up from a fall, have their bone density tested, have medications checked & how some increase risk of falls, learn about assistive devices, get their blood pressure checked, etc., and learn about the Stepping On and Strong Bodies Programs by doing a few of the exercises. We are considering running it again in 2026.
- ii. The Fall Craft & Market was very successful. We had 39 vendors in the expo and brought in \$1765 in table fees. We had 3 food trucks on site, all of whom said they did very well. There was some confusion with the event at the MARC again this year with a few vendors and one food truck thinking they were at our event. We received positive feedback from most of the vendors and they wish we would continue with the craft shows. We will have our second DeStash event on March 25th. We are also looking to have a Shop & Support event in the spring and fall if we can obtain enough participants.

- iii. The Lions Eye Bank of Wisconsin event drew fair attendance. There was no fee for this event. The organization reached out to the MEC to see if we would be willing to host. It is a great organization and we were happy to have the space for them. Holz added how much the Lions support our community.
- iv. The Dells bus trip was great. We received a large amount of positive feedback with requests to go again next year. We used Kobussen bus service for this trip and will use them again.
- b. Grant – Director shared that she submitted a grant request to the United Way to cover administrative costs for Stephanie for her after hours teaching of the Strong Bodies exercise class. At this time she is coming in later in the morning so payroll is balanced. This grant would help the staff manage overall department operations.
- c. Director shared the request she made at the budget meeting to increase the MEC’s administrative assistant from 28 to 32 hours a week. Our attendance has grown tremendously in the past few years and especially in 2025. We are averaging from 55 to 81 people per day monthly, with multiple daily offerings. It becomes difficult for us to manage when one of us is sick, on vacation, or out of the office for any reason. Committee is fully in agreement and supportive of this request.

VI. **Discussion**

- a. Committee discussed the contribution of \$10,000 into the city’s general fund for operations. Director shared that she will be meeting with the City Finance Director Emily Ley to go over how we manage our financial operations at the Center.

VII. **Adjournment** (3:15)

The next meeting will be November 20th at 2:15pm in MEC Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

TMrachek

Tammie Mrachek
MEC Director

Enrichment Center Mission

To improve lives through social, physical, and educational opportunities.