

November 16th '23 MEETING MINUTES

Merrill Enrichment Center Committee

Meeting was held on November 16th, 2023 at 2:15pm

Merrill Enrichment Center Conference Room – 303 N. Sales Street

Present: Laura Bertagnoli (Chair), Nathan Meyer (Alderpersion) Gene Bebel, Sharon Anderson, Sharon Harvey, Teresa Baker, Rod Akey, Tom Hayden, Kathy Unertl

Excused: Jennifer Clark (ADRC representative)

1. Opening

- a. Bertagnoli called the meeting to order.

2. Consent Items

- a. Motion by Bebel second by Meyer to approve October '23 minutes.
- b. Motion by Meyer second by Bebel to approve Oct/Nov '23 vouchers. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment

4. Operations

- a. As a result of discussion in the September MEC Committee meeting, Director shared a slightly revised Policy/Registration Document for our Fall Craft & Market with the Committee. The revision was in line 10 and stated “this may be enforced”, referring to suggestive or vulgar language (printed or spoken) not allowed. Director requested City Attorney Tom Hayden presence for discussion on this topic. Bebel suggested handing this out to all crafters on the day of the show next year. Bertagnoli added to hand a sheet out if the situation arises. Director agreed. Anderson asked if someone in next fall’s show was promoting a political party in a respectful way, is that ok. Akey stated it’s in the eye of the beholder and someone will always be offended. Hayden said this all comes down to speech, including community standards. He also stated the MEC staff has clear authority to enforce this. His recommendation is to include the following statement; “The MEC can decline to accept or allow any items if such display are deemed unacceptable in the best interest of the Center.” (see final revision below) Hayden also stated we can’t do much better than what we have in place with this addition. Director shared that many people respect our standards for what we will and will not accept in our shop.
- b. Akey stated 100% of revenue/fees associated with the MEC activities should go to pay for wages of MEC staff in the City, all fees collected (ex: Park & Rec) go into operations to fund positions. Wages increase ever year so we should be increasing our fees based on the economy. Bebel stated that when we first opened the doors at the new center we did not receive clear direction on how this would work. He asked how we are covered in addition to our user fees. Akey stated tax levies help with that. Akey also confirmed the revenue being taken from the MEC only funds the MEC staff, not any other departments. Director shared that we use our activity fees to run activities. If that money is taken in full each year, eventually we may not have money to offer activities. Director stated her concern that we may have to increase activity fees, which in turn would result in losing participants. Director is very concerned about our community members overall well-being as a result of this increase. Bertagnoli asked a clarifying question that current fees help offset program offerings and staff costs. Unertl confirmed. Bertagnoli also voiced the committees concern for the long term existence of the MEC if our fees are not able to cover our operating costs. She also is concerned about increasing fees especially for those who cannot afford extra fees. These are going to be difficult discussions. Baker asked if we could start an ‘Angel Fund.’ Bertagnoli and Director shared that we have discussed this option in the past and agreed this would be a difficult undertaking, involving discretion, verifying income, etc. Bebel agreed. This is not a direction we will be taking. Further discussion continued with clarifying questions regarding the needed funds for the MEC to continue operations. Director asked Finance Director Unertl if she could provide an estimate on how much revenue we would need to contribute over the next three years. Unertl stated that 2024-5 may not be as much as 2026 but to plan on 9k each year on top of what we are already contributing.
- c. Thanksgiving numbers were already over 200 with a week left for reservations. Christmas Joy numbers were low at only 14 but it is quite early for that outreach. We are hoping for 75+. There is no sit down meal this year, only delivery.
- d. We received our first Endowment fund donation of \$100.

5. ADRC

- a. Not present.

6. Discussion

- a. We hope to offer a Health Fair in the first quarter of the New Year. Director will reach out to community partners to see how many are interested.

7. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn by Meyer second by Harvey.

The next meeting date is **January 19th, 2023 at 2:15pm at the MEC.** *Vouchers will be available for review 10 minutes prior to meeting time.*

Respectfully submitted

TMrachek



Tammie Mrachek
Director
Merrill Enrichment Center
City of Merrill
(715) 536-4226
MEC@ci.merrill.wi.us
303 North Sales St., Merrill, WI
54452
www.ci.merrill.wi.us



Follow Us:



Merrill Enrichment Center
303 N. Sales Street, Merrill, WI 54452
715-536-4226
Saturday, **September 28th, 2024**
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Fall Craft & Market Vendor Guidelines

Spaces are first come first serve, we are reaching out to previous & new Crafters/ Vendors this year. Please return registration and payment to reserve your space

1. Deadline for all applications is Thursday, August 1st; late applications may be accepted if space is available.
2. Full payment must be included with the application, checks preferred.
(Spots are reserved once registration, payment & ALL requested info has been received.)
3. If you need to cancel, the deadline for a full refund is August 30th. There are no refunds after this date.
4. Please send pictures of some of your items, by email or message our Facebook page. Pictures will be used to promote the event.
5. **All spaces are 10' x 10'.**
1- 8' table and chairs provided (no tablecloths included). Crafters can bring tables as long as they fit in the space provided.
6. Location requests cannot be guaranteed.
7. **Set up time:**
 - a. **Thursday, September 26th: 1:00 PM - 4:00. We are not responsible for items set up on Thursday.**
 - b. **Saturday 7:00 AM – 8:45 AM**
8. Note: Vehicles must be moved to designated parking areas after unloading.
9. Vendors are responsible for their own display, setup and removal.
10. **Suggestive or vulgar language (printed or spoken) will not be allowed. The MEC can decline to accept or allow any items if such display are deemed unacceptable in the best interest of the Center. No alcoholic beverages, drugs, guns, knives.**
11. With the exception of vendors, we request that all items are handcrafted.
12. **Please do not begin packing up until 1:50pm. Any early packing up will forfeit space reservation for future show. Must be out by 2:45pm.**
13. We ask that you assist in clean up at the end of the day. Please remove all trash that has collected in and around your space. We thank you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

FYI: Food will be available for purchase.

Contact: MEC@ci.merrill.wi.us