



**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**AGENDA • WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2026**

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**Regular Meeting** **City Hall Council Chambers** **4:15 PM**

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- I. Call to Order**
- II. Consider approving minutes from the previous meeting**
  - 1. February 2026 Meeting Minutes
- III. Approval of Claims**
  - 1. February 2026 Claims
- IV. General Agenda Items for Consideration**
  - 1. Consider potential adjustments to Smith Center Ice Rental Rates
  - 2. Consider proposals for aquatic center pumps
- V. Monthly Reports**
  - 1. March 2026 Director's Report
- VI. Date and Time of Next Meeting**
  - 1. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, April 1st, 2026 at 4:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Merrill City Hall
- VII. Public Comment**
- VIII. Adjournment**

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**CITY OF MERRILL  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2026 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.

Roll Call:

Present: Krueger, Malm, Gulke, Osness, D8 Alderperson Rutkowski, Kubichek, Hahn

Present Not Voting: Parks Director Dan Wendorf

Excused:

Absent:

- II. **Consider approving minutes from the previous meeting**

1. **December 2025 Minutes** - ( Gulke/ Kubichek) motion/second to place minutes on file. The motion Passed.

- III. **Approval of Claims**

1. **December 2025 Bills** - ( Osness/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to approve. The motion Passed.
2. **January 2026 Bills** - ( Osness/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to approve. The motion Passed.

- IV. **General Agenda Items for Consideration**

1. **Revisit and reconsider the location of the River Bend Trail through the MARC (as discussed in 2025 and using Friends of the River Bend Trail Funding they acquired)** - Wendorf began the discussion by asking the Commission if they would reconsider the location of the proposed River Bend connector trail through the property from its formerly proposed location between the soccer fields and Rock Ridge to run along the east side of Marc Drive. Wendorf said by moving the trail it brings the trail closer to all the amenities within the park and will help with pedestrian safety for those who currently walk/bike/hike right down Marc Drive. Wendorf stated that he discussed this with the Friends of the River Bend Trail, as they are the ones who are providing the funding, and they approve of the location switch. Wendorf also informed the Commission that the blue segments of the proposed trail represent potential sidewalks/crosswalks from the parking lot areas to the soccer fields. Wendorf said that he reached out to Youth Soccer Association to see if they would be willing to invest in this project to help with pedestrian safety for their families that attend soccer games. He said he hasn't heard back from soccer yet, but it makes more sense to do this all now while we will already be ripping up ground and paving the trail, as well as a road construction project on Taylor Street in the very near vicinity. Commissioner Hahn said that he did discuss with a few soccer board members, and they are not sure if they have the funding to do all the

proposed soccer paths but will see what they can do. He said it may have to be done in phases and spread it out into future years. He asked Wendorf if he could break each of the three blue segments into individual costs so they could see if they could fund one or two with this project. Wendorf said that if bids come back over the amount of funding that the Friends of the River Bend Trail have they have a plan to remove the proposed portions that directly connect to the dog park and the path from the softball restrooms/playground area towards Council Grounds. This ensures that the main objective of connecting the River Bend Trail (with a paved path) to Council Grounds is accomplished.

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

2. **Consider potential Smith Center Ice Rental & Cancellation Policy (non-user groups only)** - Wendorf began the discussion by saying that he would like to see a policy for "non-user group" ice rental and cancellation. He said that a few times this year they have had a few groups reserve the ice but as it got closer to the date, they backed out, leaving us with open ice and not enough time to back fill it. Wendorf stated that this is simply a way to tighten up the process and protect the Smith Center from future potential cancellations. Wendorf said that he researched information from several other rinks to see what they were doing and used that information to tailor it to a potential policy that he feels best suits the Smith Center. Wendorf summarized the proposal stating that he would like 50% payment on ice time requests and any outside organization would need to cancel their ice request outside of 7 days to be able to get their payment back. Wendorf said this is common for other ice rinks and reminded everyone that it would only apply to outside organizations (does not include Merrill Youth Hockey, Merrill High School Hockey, and Merrill Ice Reflections Figure Skating Club).

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

3. **Consider proposals for Athletic Park Scoreboard replacement (100% donated funds)** - Wendorf began the discussion by stating that all funds for the replacement scoreboard were raised by Merrill Baseball supporters through the generosity of local businesses. Wendorf referenced the information he provided for the Commission with comparisons on each of the companies and their warranties. Wendorf stated that after extensive research he recommends the Nevco scoreboard. He said that we currently have a Nevco board at Athletic, 4 Nevco's at Lion's Park, and 4 Nevco's at the MARC. They have had a very good history of working well and lasting a long time and their customer service has been exemplary. Wendorf stated that the bids included removal of the old scoreboard, delivery, installation of the new one, and electrical work associated with it as well. Wendorf recommends the Nevco quote of \$31,129.94. He reminded everyone that funding for this

project was all donated.

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

**V. Monthly Reports**

1. **February 2026 Director's Report** - Wendorf summarized the monthly report and highlighted some of the events from the past few months as well as some of the events coming up.

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

1. **The next regularly scheduled meeting is Wednesday, March 4th, 2026 at 4:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Merrill City Hall. -**

**VII. Public Comment** Kyle Gulke, 1504 Jackson St., summarized the recently released information and highlights from the Ice Age Trail Alliance's "Mammoth Challenge" that was held statewide in October. He highlighted the number of local visitors as well as some comments they shared praising the Merrill community and several businesses they enjoyed while they were visiting for their hikes. There were visitors that came from all over the state as well as the Midwest.

**VIII. Adjournment** ( Osness/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski) motion/second to adjourn. The motion Passed.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

2/1/2026

AMERICAN WELDING AND GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL	1/31/2026	11432838	\$84.87	10-55300-03-41500
AMERICAN WELDING AND GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL	2/3/2026	11432525	\$124.47	10-55200-02-15000
BEACON ATHLETICS	SPARKLE LINE CHALK	2/6/2026	0627990-IN	\$547.20	10-55200-03-4000
BLUEJAY 06.3	ADVERTISING	1/31/2026	20222-11	\$259.00	10-55300-03-41500
BRANDT EXTINGUISHERS	6 V BATTERY	2/3/2026	15000	\$39.00	10-55200-02-15000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/RYAN	1/15/2026	4256396B6	\$99.11	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	MATS/MOPS	1/22/2026	4257145055	\$231.38	10-55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/RYAN	1/22/2026	4257145186	\$99.11	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/RYAN	1/29/2026	4257888536	\$99.11	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	MATS/MOPS	2/5/2026	4258636863	\$82.68	10-55400-02-23250
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/RYAN	2/5/2026	4258636851	\$99.11	10-55200-03-46000
CINTAS	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE/RYAN	2/12/2026	4259386558	\$99.11	10-55200-03-46000
ENTRANCE TECHNOLOGIES	PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT	2/18/2026	33791	\$135.00	10-55400-02-16800
HAENCO SUPPLY	FLOOR SCRUBBER PARTS	2/2/2026	17353	\$84.73	10-55400-03-50000
HAENCO SUPPLY	FILTER KIT	2/26/2026	17409	\$144.82	10-55400-03-40000
LAURIE NIKOLAI-SWITLIK	SECURITY DEPOSIT	2/23/2026	VOUCHER	\$100.00	10-21-7200
LAURIE NIKOLAI-SWITLIK	PARK RENTAL	2/23/2026	VOUCHER	\$90.00	10-45200-46722
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	PRIV LOCK	1/26/2026	249582	\$35.98	10-55200-03-50000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	LOOPED MOPHEAD	2/4/2026	2497631	\$31.98	10-55200-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	TRASH BAGS	2/20/2026	250079	\$33.99	10-55400-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	TRASH BAGS	2/17/2026	250014	\$33.99	10-55200-03-40000
MERRILL ACE HARDWARE	FASTENERS/PAINT	2/10/2026	249872	\$123.96	10-55200-08-91500
NAPA AUTO PARTS	COUPLER/ADAPTER	2/5/2026	175856	\$19.47	10-55400-03-50000
NORTHERN BATTERY	REPLACEMENT BATTERIES FOR FLOOR SCRUBBER	2/4/2026	14900204261049.00	\$951.96	26-55425-03-40000
NORTHWOODS SUPERIOR	SPARKLING GREEN CLEANER	2/6/2026	434757	\$210.63	10-55200-03-40000
RHYME	COPY MACHINE	1/12/2026	AR901890	\$17.13	10-55400-03-13000
SAMS CLUB	YEARLY RENEWAL	2/9/2026		\$52.75	10-55200-02-15000
STAINLESS SPECIALISTS	FAN MOTOR/ BAND CLAMP/HEATER AT S.C.	1/28/2026	45336	\$2,516.15	10-55400-03-50000
THE HOME DEPOT	SPRINKLER COMPRESSOR AT S.C.	2/4/2026		\$549.00	10-55400-03-50000
TRACTOR SUPPLY CO	1500 WATT CAST ALUM SINKER	2/19/2026	61910	\$69.99	10-55200-03-50000
WALMART	EASTER CANDY	2/18/2026		\$234.91	10-55300-03-41500



# City of Merrill

Parks & Recreation Department  
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 parks@ci.merrill.wi.us

## Ice Rates – Surrounding Ice Arenas

City/Rink	User Group Rate	Non-User Group Rate	Other/Flat Rate
<b>Merrill</b>	\$85/hr	\$125/hr	
<b>Rhineland</b>			\$175/hr
<b>Marshfield</b>			\$150/hr
<b>Eau Claire</b>	\$198/hr	\$233/hr	
<b>Lakeland</b>	\$150/hr	\$250/hr	
<b>Eagle River</b>			\$200/hr
<b>Greenheck (DCE)</b>	\$145/hr	\$155/hr	
<b>Shawano</b>			\$225/90 minutes
<b>Mosinee</b>	\$75-\$110/hr	\$150/hr	
<b>Tomahawk</b>	\$100/hr	\$125/hr	
<b>Wausau</b>	\$165/hr		\$230/hr HS Games
<b>Medford</b>			\$10/skater – minimum \$100 charge

Obviously we are significantly lower than other rinks in our area (and always have been) and need to adjust our pricing. I would like to gradually increase our rates so we are in the same range as the other rinks. I think it is important to do it gradually however, so that we can work with our main user groups to allow them to adjust their fees or operations. We want to make sure that they are still buying as much ice as previous years and that an increase doesn't lead to decreased ice time, as that defeats the purpose of raising our rates to cover increasing costs that we incur. It is very important that we are always on the same page with Merrill Youth Hockey and Merrill Ice Reflections Figure Skating Club.

I would propose that we raise our rates by \$10 per hour for our user groups and non-user groups for the following season. I would suggest continuing that \$10 per hour increase for the next several years until we get closer to our neighboring rinks. Year to year the cost of doing business always increases and we need to make sure we can adjust our rates accordingly. As a facility owned and operated by the City, we want to make sure we can defer as much of those costs away from the general taxpayers who don't utilize the rink.



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**2026 Bierman Family Aquatic Center Pool Pump Replacements – RFP Results**

<b>Name of Business</b>	<b>Meet Specifications (Y/N)</b>	<b>Proposal Total</b>
Badger Swimpools, Inc. N789 Golf Road Prairie Du Sac, WI 53578	Yes	\$29,426.90
Wastewater Solutions LLC 1501 SE Decker Ave Unit E-515 Stuart, FL 34994	Yes – sort of (they spec'd out a different brand than we asked for but it meets our specifications)	\$29,084.00



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## March 2026 Parks & Recreation Director's Report

**Parks:** February brought us almost all four seasons of weather to say the least. We ended up having to shut our outdoor ice rinks down for the season after the mid-February 50+ degree run as they began to melt too much and the conditions were poor. At this point in the winter, we won't put any more effort/investment into them because we are too close to spring (longer days, stronger sun angle, etc.). All in all we had a pretty good outdoor ice rink season. The crew is just about finished up with picnic table repair work so we'll be fully stocked and ready for the season. We have been working ahead to prepare ourselves for the crazy spring season that is fast approaching. Over the past few decades we have learned to be ready regardless because you never know how fast (or slow) spring is going to arrive. We don't have the staffing numbers to be able to react quickly to an early/quick spring arrival without pre-planning and being ready for anything. This includes making sure we have all of our baseball/softball supplies ordered as well as all of our athletic field equipment serviced and prepared to work. As I say every year, we always hope for "average" weather from here on in to allow snow to melt gradually, frost to disappear, and us to have time to work on fields so they are set up and ready before they get beat on for the next eight months. We hosted the Snowbound in the Underdown (organized by Ironbull) on February 21<sup>st</sup> at the City Forest. Mother Nature gave us 6" of fresh snow the day before the event to bless everyone with great trails on both races and another huge turnout. I met with Chris Schotz on February 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss the City Forest trails on both sides of the new bridge as well as signage that we will have to install for better wayfinding in that area. The new bridge has been getting used a lot which is great to see. We're going to work with Lincoln County as well to incorporate bike trails on their side of the bridge in Prairie Dells Park. The scoreboard for Athletic Park has been ordered and tentatively scheduled for delivery on April 1<sup>st</sup> with install to follow very shortly after. Hopefully it is finished up before the high school season begins but if not, they can make due either without a board or use a temporary board. I have been working on our other capital projects as well. Hopefully we can approve pool pumps at our March meeting and get that finished up. We have discussed the Prairie Trails Bridge decking already with the crew and will get that ready for this summer. The concrete surrounds on the remaining shelter(s) will take place late spring/early summer with the help of the Street Department's concrete crew that they use for sidewalk panel replacement. They have the equipment for it and it is nice to keep that in-house and we are thankful to have their help on these projects. Our staffing is all set for buildings & grounds this year. It is nice that all of our seasonals from last year are returning so we don't have to train anyone and can just hit the ground running.

**Forestry:** I was able to do some tree inspections briefly when the weather warmed up and the snowbanks receded but have more to do as the weather improves and snow goes away. I also like to evaluate some trees when they bud out and/or leaf out to determine percentage of crown life/death before deciding on what to do with that particular tree. The Street Department has been out, when time allows, pruning and removing trees from the fall list that were previously inspected. So far our trees are looking pretty good at this point in the winter and thankfully the extreme cold was short lived. Now we have to hope for no freezing rain or really late heavy snowfalls to damage branches or fresh tree buds when they are vulnerable. I am excited to be able to plant more trees again this year – we did get our funding back that was removed in 2025 for more trees. This is important because we do need to replant almost all of State Street that was redone last year and that will take quite a few trees just for that.

**Recreation:** Our spring/summer recreation program planning is almost finished up. We are just putting some finishing touches on things and fine tuning all of the details so we are ready to hit the ground running. Like the past few years, we are partnering with the Foto News to publish and promote our programs. We have a great season of recreation programs planned once again this year. We will see how many Summer Playground registrations we get this year to see if we can adjust our maximum numbers for next season (and staffing levels as well). Last few years we have



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had a limit of 60 and were always slightly below that number for most of the summer. As we have discussed previously we are trying to make sure that we control our costs while continuing to provide high quality programs for our citizens. There are more opportunities for kids/parents now than in the past, which is great for families, but it does take away from everyone's overall numbers so we just need to adjust accordingly as we see trends and be prepared. We are not quite full yet with the few openings that we have this year for our recreational staff but do have some good candidates to interview in the coming weeks. We have our annual Children's Festival coming up on March 14<sup>th</sup>, and we are doing it at the Expo Center at the Fairgrounds this year because of ice being in yet at the Smith Center. We combined our Children's Festival with the Easter Egg Hunt last year to combine two events into one that were situated very close together and help on staffing. With an early Easter this year and ice still being in at the Smith Center, this was our best way to accomplish longer ice time and hosting this annual event.

**Smith Center:** Ice time is still very busy and rolling along and we have a few more weeks to go. Our last day of ice is on March 19<sup>th</sup>, which is slightly later than previous years but Youth Hockey had demand for a little more ice. As always, right after March 19<sup>th</sup>, we will turn the floor up and begin the ice removal process so we are ready for dry floor season. It is a fairly tedious process to remove the ice so it will be several weeks before we have the arena ice-free and clean. In the meantime we still have a very busy last few weeks of ice with youth hockey games & practices as well as figure skating right up until the end. As previously stated, due to an early Easter and late ice time we have moved our Children's Festival/Easter Egg Hunt to the Expo Center at the Fairgrounds. This allows us to not have to sprint to try and get everything ready inside the Smith Center. Once the ice is completely removed, we'll have to spend a good deal of time deep cleaning everywhere after almost six months of hard usage in every corner of the building. We had a few issues with our fire suppression sprinkler system in mid-February. Our compressor that keeps pressure on the system failed so we replaced that and then found a pipe with a leak in it (all of those pipes are 31 years old) so that had to be replaced. So we should be good for now but this is my lead in to begin an updated preventative maintenance and equipment re-evaluation this year with Stainless Specialists and several other vendors. The Smith Center is 30 years old now and with tens of thousands of visitors each year, things simply wear out, so like everything else we have we need to fix, replace, restore, and maintain this community gem. Some of our other facilities and amenities are getting to the same point. Playgrounds, buildings, equipment wears down over time and do need to be addressed in a strategic manner. We have to plan now for the future so we don't have to react to everything all of the time.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Dan Wendorf*

Dan Wendorf  
Parks & Recreation Director  
City of Merrill