

**CITY OF MERRILL
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2026 MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS 4:15 PM**

I. Call to Order Roll Call:

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

Present Not Voting: Parks Director Dan Wendorf

Excused:

Absent:

Chairperson Krueger called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

Wendorf introduced new Recreation Manager Emily Heckendorf to the Commission and welcomed her to the family. Wendorf said she has been with us for one month already and has been doing an amazing job and is going to do great things for this community.

II. Consider approving minutes from the previous meeting

1. **August 2026 Minutes** - (Osness/D8 Alderperson Rutkowski)
motion/second to approve. The motion Passed.

III. Approval of Claims

1. **August 2026 Bills** - (D8 Alderperson Rutkowski/ Henkelman)
motion/second to approve. The motion Passed.

IV. General Agenda Items for Consideration

1. **Discuss and potentially consider fee adjustments for 2027** - Wendorf began the discussion by explaining how user fees help offset our overall budget and that it lessens the burden on taxpayers by charging those who directly use/impact some of our facilities. Wendorf went through the attached information showing his suggested fee increases and those include: park shelter rental fees for Kitchenette/Stange Parks increase from \$70/day to \$80/day, park shelter rental fees for Ott's/Riverside/Normal Parks from \$60/day to \$70/day, Agra Pavilion rental fee from \$90/day to \$100/day, Smith Center Community Room Rental from \$20/hr (2 hr minimum) to \$35/hr (2 hr minimum), birthday party packages (Smith Center) from \$9/\$10/\$12 for hot dog, ice cream, and pizza parties respectively to \$10/\$11/\$13, tree memorials from \$250 per tree to \$300. Hahn asked if it would make more sense to adjust the Smith Center fee from \$35 to \$40 to make it an even number and also being that it hasn't been adjusted in 30 years he felt it was fair given the value of inflation over that time. Henkeman agreed with that sentiment and Wendorf said he thought that was fair. Wendorf stated these adjustments would go into effect in 2027.

(Malm/ Henkelman) motion/second to approve. The motion Passed. . .
Motion included the suggested edit from Hahn with the Smith Center Community Room fee to be \$40/hr (2 hr minimum)

2. **Discuss and consider 2027 Capital Requests** - Krueger began the discussion by informing the commission that Wendorf did have to already present this capital budget to the City Council since they met twice between our August meeting and today's meeting. Wendorf began the discussion by directing their attention to the detailed Bierman Family Aquatic Center budget sheet as requested at the last meeting. He said he has since received an estimate from Badger Pool to replaster the entire pool basin and that number came in at \$198,000, which was a significant amount higher than Wendorf anticipated. Wendorf stated that his feel from City Council was that they were at least somewhat comfortable with the original request of \$150,000 for pool projects, and he wasn't comfortable adjusting the request in fear of not getting the funding to do other projects. He suggested sticking with the original amount and doing as much as we could with that amount for this year and also doing as much plaster work as we can with what we have. Rutkowski agreed with Wendorf, she was comfortable with the \$150,000 for the aquatic center request but also felt that going beyond that may not be a good idea. Wendorf also added that the Prairie Trails Fishing Pier would be last on the priority for this list and if something had to be cut, that would be where he would suggest, as it could always be patched up and handled later. The commission was good with the remainder of the request as presented.

(D8 Alderperson Rutkowski/ Henkelman) motion/second to adjourn. The motion Passed.

V. Monthly Reports

1. **September 2026 Director's Report** - Wendorf summarized his report and asked if there were any questions. Malm asked Wendorf if there was a date scheduled for paving the new MARC River Bend Trail portion. Wendorf stated that he didn't have an exact date given yet. Wendorf stated that RC Pavers performed their final grading last week which typically means that they will be paving very shortly as they don't like to leave the final grade in a public setting for very long. Wendorf and Malm continued that discussion for a little while.

VI. Date and Time of Next Meeting

1. **The next regularly scheduled Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting is Wednesday, October 7th, at 4:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Merrill City Hall. -**

VII. Public Comment There was no public comment.

VIII. Adjournment (D8 Alderperson Rutkowski/ Henkelman) motion/second to adjourn. The motion Passed. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

