



**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA • THURSDAY NOVEMBER 2, 2023**

---

**Regular Meeting**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**6:00 PM**

---

To attend remotely call 414-909-5322 PIN 932 050 222 #

- I. Call to Order
- II. Consider placing the minutes from the previous meeting on file:
  1. Minutes from September 7, 2023
- III. Agenda Items for Consideration:
  1. Fair Update
  2. Rodeo Update
  3. Permanent Vendor Update
  4. Calender of Events
  5. Discussion on promoting the Festival Grounds:
    - a. Update and discussion on Food Truck event May 18, 2024
- IV. Monthly Reports:
  1. Monthly Report - Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund
  2. Consider placing monthly reports on file
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Date and time of next meeting: Call of the Chair
- VII. Adjournment

**CITY OF MERRILL  
FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, September 7, 2023 MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting      City Hall Council Chambers      6:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Mayor Steve Hass, Alderperson Steve Sabatke, Bryan Bloch, Brad Becker and Becky Meyer. Alderperson Michael Caylor and Alderperson Rick were excused.

Others Present: City Clerk Anderson-Malm, City Attorney Hayden, City Engineer Akey, Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund, Facilities Maintenance Manager Wszalek, David Buck and Merrill Community Media video operator.

- I. **Call to Order** - Chair Hass called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. **Minutes from previous meeting** – Alderperson Sabatke made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 3rd meeting. Bryan Bloch seconded and the motion carried.
- III. **Agenda Items for Consideration:**
  1. **Fair Update** – Fair Association Rep Becker gave an update. He stated the fair went well. The Fair Board is discussing possible changes and entertainment for 2024. He thanked the City for all the help that was received from employees. The dates for the fair are August 7 – August 11, 2024.
  2. **Rodeo Update** – Rodeo Association Rep Bloch gave an update.
  3. **Permanent Vendor Update** – Permanent Vendor Rep Meyer gave an update and stated everyone had a good year. She mentioned the Fair Board was very responsive with any requests. No final numbers were available yet. She also mentioned moving the fair to earlier in the month may help with getting volunteers.
  4. **Calendar of Events** – City Attorney Hayden gave an update.
  5. **Discussion on promoting the Festival Grounds** – The list was provided in the packet. Mayor Hass mentioned if there are any additional ideas/suggestions, they should be emailed to Hallie Savall or himself.
  6. **Discussion on Capital improvements for the Festival Grounds** – Facilities Maintenance Manager Wszalek discussed barn/roof improvements and suggested finding a way to complete a wing each year. He also mentioned additional capital improvements such as; fans for wings, additional lighting, electrical updates and adding showers to a bathroom.

The Committee discussed the capital improvements and decided electrical updates would be the number 1 improvement with fans being second. Mayor Hass and PWDCE Akey will meet and create a list of capital improvements to forward to the budget.

Attachment: 2023-09-07 FGC Minutes (10520 : Minutes from September 7, 2023)

**IV. Monthly Reports:**

**Monthly Report – Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund** – The report was provided at the meeting. Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund highlighted some of the items on his report.

Alderson Sabatke made a motion to place his report on file. Mayor Hass seconded and the motion carried.

**V. Public Comment** – There was no public comment.**VI. Establish date and time of next meeting** – The next meeting will be Thursday, October 5th at 6:00 PM.**VII. Adjournment** – Bryan Bloch made a motion to adjourn. Alderson Sabatke seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Minutes prepared by: Lori Anderson-Malm City Clerk

## UP COMING EVENTS AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

### 2023

|                 |                                                  |                                                             |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>November</b> | 11/2/2023                                        | (Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee |
|                 | 11/4/2023                                        | Lange Auction                                               |
|                 | 11/5/2023                                        | Merrill Football Booster Club Banquet                       |
|                 | 11/7/2023                                        | Seminar (evening rental)                                    |
|                 | 11/11/2023                                       | Quinceañera                                                 |
|                 | 11/25/2023                                       | Tentative Lange Auction                                     |
|                 | Every Monday & Wednesday evening – Pound Classes |                                                             |
| <b>December</b> | 12/7/2023                                        | (Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee |
|                 | Every Monday & Wednesday evening – Pound Classes |                                                             |
| <b>January</b>  | 1/7/2024                                         | (Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee |
|                 | Every Monday & Wednesday evening – Pound Classes |                                                             |

## FESTIVAL GROUNDS REPORT

10-5-23

### VOLUNTEER GROUPS

This month has reminded me how lucky we are here in Merrill. We are especially blessed with great volunteer groups that help us out. A few years ago, we started using volunteer groups to do set-up, take down and post event cleaning for several event. The group provides people such as students, parents and teachers to accomplish those tasks for the events and the event producer pays the group an agreed amount for the service.

The funds go into the group's account to help support their activities and the promoter accomplishes his set-up and move-out efficiently and with confidence that it is done right. Without these groups, events may encounter cost and expense that would be prohibitive. Most of the events at the Expo grounds exist on very slim margins so receiving this service helps the events stay viable.

The High School Trap and Skeet Club, the High School Band Boosters and the Merrill Riders Club have done an excellent job for us. Please thank them is you have occasion to do so.

### COUNTY FAIR/BARN

The white wash inside looks outstanding. Brad Becker and the committee as well as city departments did a great job on it.

### FLEA MARKET(S)

Jodie Malsack and her husband sold all spaces out for their first show. Although Jodie had to deal with a last minute family health issue, she and her husband did a great job as a first time event. In speaking with vendors, they seemed happy with the results of the inaugural show.

### AUCTION(S)

Auction crowds have grown to approx. 150. The producer is working with several key people to help him grow the number of auctions. The last show had almost 200 attendees and produced a high level of sales.

### QUAD RACING

Event on July 29. Tim English and his family have done an excellent job. With its success, other groups have been spoken to and are thinking about doing competitions also. We will help Tim make some

adjustments in dirt and jumps that will reduce gravel. We will also help them become aware of Tourism grants from the Chamber.

#### WRESTLING

The wrestling show was well received by the audience. The promoter was hoping for 200+ people but the crowd was closer to 150. Ryan Schwartzman has helped the event raise significant sponsor dollars which has kept the show "in the black".

#### GUN SHOW(S)

The producer was more than happy with the last show. It set did not set an attendance record, but it was well attended. All booth space was sold out with a waiting list. I talking with many vendors, they are very happy that the show moved to Merrill from Wausau.

#### MOUNTED SHOOTING

The event was happy and successful. It should be an annual event now and we will try to help them with possible grants from Tourism. They formed a working relationship with the Merrill Rider's Club which should help both organizations.

Weddings continue to be a mainstay and universally are happy with the facilities. We have done many showings and walk throughs on the weekends and in the evening. Brides like to bring back their wedding party, family and DJ's to help finalize their plans.

We are looking at content and facilities for potential camping and will help the city department reviews as needed.