



CITY OF MERRILL
MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
MINUTES • THURSDAY OCTOBER 21, 2021

Regular Meeting

City Hall Council Chambers

5:15 PM

I. Call to Order

Alderman Blake called the meeting to order at 5:15 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Rick Blake	Chair	Present	
John M. Van Lieshout	Aldersperson - Fifth District	Present	5:18 PM
Mark Weix	Aldersperson - Seventh District	Present	
Jessica Zellers	Library Director	Present	

Other attendees (either in-person or remotely) included: Melissa Wrycha, Renea Frederick, Scott Steele, City Attorney Tom Hayden and City Clerk Bill Heideman. Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Agenda Items:

1. Update on reaction/input from Merrill Chamber of Commerce regarding October 20, 2021 presentation by Melissa Wrycha.

Melissa Wrycha reported that the presentation seemed to go well. The Chamber seemed very interested in collaboration, although they did have some questions and concerns.

Alderman Blake mentioned that he will be extending an “official” invitation to Clyde Nelson to attend future Marketing and Communications Committee meetings. Mr. Nelson is the Executive Director of the Chamber.

2. Discuss Communications, Personnel and Budget sections of Marketing, Branding and Communications Initiative.

Information was in the meeting packet.

This agenda item was not addressed at the meeting.

3. Consider budget recommendations to forward to October 29, 2021 Committee of the Whole Budget Meeting.

Scott Steele led discussion on expenses that will be necessary components of an initial Marketing Budget. He noted that we will need to weight the “worth” of various components, based on available resources.

Hiring a Social Media person is necessary. Scott Steele suggested that this be a contracted, part-time position, approximately 20 hours per week. He estimated the annual cost for this position at \$25,000.

Hiring a Director of Communications is also necessary. Scott Steele suggested that this also be a contracted position, with the person working 30 to 35 hours per week. He estimated the annual cost for this position at \$50,000 to \$60,000.

Alderman Van Lieshout suggested that the Chamber of Commerce should be approached for possible funding for some of the costs.

Annual advertising costs were estimated at \$36,000, although Scott Steele suggested that, for 2022 only, \$27,000 (April to December) may suffice.

Funds will also be necessary for materials, branding and a logo. The total of these costs were estimated to be \$25,000 to \$35,000.

The total amount needed for 2022 was estimated at \$100,000 to \$120,000.

Alderman Blake suggested that Cable Franchise Fee funds are available to help fund the 2022 Marketing Budget. He proposed that the request to the Common Council be for \$125,000.

Alderman Blake will discuss the proposal with City Administrator Johnson and Finance Director Unertl, and a formal proposal will be drafted, for consideration at the October 29th Committee of the Whole budget meeting.

4. Next Steps

Scott Steele will begin drafting a job description for the Director of Communications position.

III. Public Comment Period

None.

IV. Establish date, time & location of next meeting

The next regular meeting has already been scheduled. It will be at 5:15 P.M. on Thursday, November 18th, and will be held in the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

V. Adjournment

Motion (Weix/Van Lieshout) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:06 P.M.