

OCTOBER '23 MEETING MINUTES

Merrill Enrichment Center Committee

Meeting was held on October 19th, 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, Jay Thlusty, Teresa Baker, *via phone:* 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 September '23 minutes.
- b. Motion by Meyer second by Bebel to approve Sept/Oct '23 vouchers. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment

- a. Bertagnoli shared her discussion with Mike Mathson from Merrill PT regarding an idea to run a health fair at the MEC coming up in the New Year. All committee members agreed that it would be a desirable community offering. Bertagnoli added that the ADRC may also be a good resource to add to this offering. Clark likes this idea and mentioned the ADRC has not been able to find a partner to offer their Stepping On program for quite a while now. She may reach out to Mike to see if he would be interested. Bebel recommended reaching out to Aspirus for resources and including foot care as a part of this offering. Baker added there is a foot doctor at the hospital and to reach out to Jane Bentz as she has wanted to run a health fair as well. Thlusty added the hospital auxiliary may want to help as well. The contact is Ramona Hornischer. Baker and Meyer both praised Merrill PT's service.

Director will try to schedule the health fair in the first quarter of 2024 but it will depend on the availability of the partners we are seeking to work with.

4. Operations

- a. Director handed out a document from LPI outlining the cost of advertising in our newsletter. Advertising in our newsletter helps the MEC to not incur a cost. Director requested of the Committee to mention the need to the businesses they frequent. We are thankful that The Merrill Chamber agreed to share the need with their members.

We also have advertising sales for our new check in system. Some community members are asking if these calls are valid or scams. Director asked committee to share information with our community businesses and field any questions. Director also shared that we have one new ad committed for this year but feels more may purchase ad space in the New Year with a fresh budget.

- b. Director shared recap of our Open House. See attached sheet. Bertagnoli received feedback from one individual at the open house regarding cost of offerings, specifically the Strong Bodies program. She had received a scholarship per se, to pay for the sessions as she would not be able to afford otherwise. Director is aware that some may need this but we do not advertise it because of the legal aspects that we do not want to get into. However if someone is part of the Stockbox program they would more than likely be eligible to have the Strong Bodies (SB) course covered through the funding we acquired from UW-Extension. Bebel asked if we have a list of emails to reach people (for the open house for example). Anderson added that would reach current participants rather than new. Director stated we use Facebook for reaching those who may not have attending our offerings as we did to promote the open house. Harvey recommended using our outside sign to advertise the SB class.
- c. The Fall Craft & Market was a huge success. See attached sheet. We had over 70 vendors in two buildings and hope to grow to a third building next fall. The date next year will be a week prior to the past few years in hopes for better weather. Thlusty voiced concern about some of the items for sale at the event which contained vulgar language. He also asked if we had anything in our policy regarding this. The Director assured him *we do have it in our policy* but enforcing it is the difficult part. Anderson, Bertagnoli, and Meyer all spoke on this topic as well. Director will check into more legal issue with the City Attorney to revise our application. We will be stricter than we currently are to eliminate these items in our future events. It should be noted that we are one of the few hosts of these types of events that choose to have this in our policy.
- d. Director shared budget draft with Committee. Director explained the General Fund (#10) and the Reserved and Designated funds (26). Meyer asked where the money goes to that they take. Director stated that it goes to operations. Director will voice concern regarding the amount of money we are requested to pay back each year as that amount is 4-5 times our revenues.

Bebel asked who decides to remove that amount from our budget and where is the policy to show why the city does that. Director will try to get that answer for the November meeting.

5. ADRC

- a. Clark shared the Dementia Care Specialists who ran workshops here at the MEC, are now working with the TB Scott Library on training the staff for dementia awareness and how to recognize symptoms and how to converse properly with the person. Bertagnoli recommended reaching out to our local businesses for this training as well. Scott and Jennifer will be back at the MEC in 2024 with their offerings again and Director will request the staff training as well.
Also discussed was the Memory Café. This is a place for those with dementia to be together in a safe space to socialize, engage, relax and have fun. The MEC will entertain this option. A new caregiver support group will take place in the Lincoln County Service Center building... beginning?

6. Discussion

- a. Tlusty brought up our reserve fund and suggested we start to spend more money on presenters (for example, to bring in Green Bay Packer players to attract younger generations) and offerings that we have hesitated on in the past due to the cost, if the city is going to continue to take more money from us. Meyer agreed. Meyer wanted to make a commitment to use \$15000 for events like this in 2024. Director cautioned the committee that we will not spend just to spend but rather ensure we are spending for a worthwhile offering for our community which aligns with our mission. Events at this level take many months to plan and organize in addition to payroll hours. We also have our bi-annual Festival of Quilts in August of next year. Meyer stated our committee may want to set up a meeting next year with the appropriate committee within the city to discuss plans for MEC growth and additional staff. Director will consider adding this topic to November's meeting.
- b. Director shared the information received from our police department and the cost incurred for our bus vandalism.

7. Adjournment

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

The next meeting date is **November 16th, 2023 at 2:15pm at the MEC.** *Vouchers will be available for review 10 minutes prior to meeting time.*

Respectfully submitted
TMrachek



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Open House Recap

Overall Cost

Food	\$96 (meat, cheese cracker trays/grapes/PDP bars
Gift Bags	\$286.50 (stress ball, notepad, pen, mints, bag)
Payroll Hours	Tammie & Vicki - 2.5 hours extra each

- Volunteers - Gigi, Pam, Laura, Karen, Rosie, Woodcarving group
- Attendance was steady between 2pm-4:15pm. We expected more traffic for the last 1.5-2 hours.
- Best guess on attendance overall was 40-50
- Feedback was to offer daytime activities for homeschool groups, adding evening cribbage, another evening of the week

Fall Craft & Market Event Recap

\$2060	Table fees revenue
\$296	Fall quilt raffle revenue
\$2356	Total revenue
\$742	Craft shop sales

- Weather was a bit chilly
- Had 3 patio heaters running all day
- Attendance was strong and steady for most of the day
- Had a wait list so we expect to utilize the Sell building next year as well!
- Date will move up into September – wedding was booked for our normal craft event date. However we had been planning on moving the event up at least a week due to weather concerns

Merrill Enrichment Center
303 N. Sales Street, Merrill, WI 54452
715-536-4226

Saturday, **May 6th, 2023**

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Craft 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 Wednesday, March 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 March 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, May 4th: 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. **No alcoholic beverages, drugs, guns, knives, suggestive or vulgar language (printed or spoken) will be allowed.**
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