CITY OF MERRILL

FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

AGENDA ● THURSDAY OCTOBER 3, 2019

Regular Meeting | **Bierman Building** | **6:00 PM**

I. Call to Order

II. Minutes of previous meeting(s):

1. Minutes of August 1, 2019 meeting

III. Agenda items for consideration:

1. Cattle barn exterior
2. Calendar of events

IV. Monthly Reports:

1. Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund
2. Food Vendor Rep. Caylor - No report, because Food Vendor Committee did not meet.

V. Public Comment Period

VI. Establish date, time & location of next meeting

VII. Adjournment

CITY OF MERRILL

FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE

MINUTES ● THURSDAY AUGUST 1, 2019

Regular Meeting **Bierman Building** **6:00 PM**

I. Call to Order

Alderman Norton called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Michael Caylor	Food Vendor Rep.	Present	
Rob Norton	Alderperson - Seventh District	Present	
John M. Van Lieshout	Alderperson - Fifth District	Present	
Derek Woellner	Mayor	Present	
Bryan Bloch	Rodeo Assn. Rep.	Absent	
Brad Becker	Fair Assn. Rep.	Present	

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Festival Grounds Manager Richard Bjorklund, Bryan Moodie, Alderman Paul Russell, Alderman Steve Hass, Alderman Steve Sabatke, Krista Mitchell, LaDonna Fermanich, Bill Bialecki, Ryan Schwartzman, Chris Vorpagel and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A representative from Merrill Productions was present to videotape the meeting.

II. Minutes of previous meeting(s):

1. Minutes of June 13, 2019 meeting

Because there was no quorum at the June 13th, 2019 meeting, no action on the minutes was necessary.

III. Agenda items for consideration:

1. Consider 2020 Captial Improvements/Budget Items

Proposed 2020 budget information was in the meeting packet.

City Administrator Johnson began by reviewing the 2020 Budget Proposed Summary. He then reviewed the 2020 Operating Budget Festival Grounds accounts, including the Tractor Pull, Merrill Festival Grounds, Bierman Building and Room Tax accounts. He noted that the total proposed budgeted amount is less than then 2019 budgeted amount, due primarily to the fact that no major operating fund projects are planned in 2020.

City Administrator Johnson then reported on the 2020 Capital Budget. $40.000 has been included for Cattle Barn rehabilitation. It is hoped that a grant will be received to pay for this, but it needs to be budgeted in case the City is not awarded the grant. It is critical to maintain this historic building.

Motion (Caylor/Becker) to recommend approving the proposed 2020 Festival Grounds Operating Budget and the 2020 Festival Grounds Capital Budget and refer this recommendation and both budgets to the 2020 budget process.

Attachment: 2019-08-01 FGC Minutes (4566 : Minutes of August 1, 2019 meeting)

RESULT:	REFER TO BUDGET PROCESS

2. Consider amending Code of Ordinance Chapter 2, Article VI, Division I, Section 2-151, to change the Mayor from a voting member of the Festival Grounds Committee to an ex-officio, non-voting member and change the City Administrator from an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Festival Grounds Committee to a voting member.

The proposed ordinance was in the meeting packet. It would remove the Mayor as a member of the Festival Grounds Committee and change the City Administrator from an ex-officio member to a voting member of the committee.

Alderman Norton reported that he requested this agenda item after being asked to do so by some committee members.

Motion (Woellner) to table. Motion failed due to lack of a second.

Motion (Caylor/Woellner) to postpone indefinitely. Motion failed.

Motion (Woellner/Caylor) to remove the Mayor from the Festival Grounds Committee and add a citizen member to the committee. The citizen member would be subject to Common Council approval.

Ryan Schwartzman remarked that he was opposed to the City Administrator being a voting member of the committee.

Motion (Caylor) to remove the Mayor from the committee and add a Beer Stand Representative. Food Vendor Rep. Caylor then requested that his motion be withdrawn. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Motion (Caylor/Norton) to recommend removing the Mayor as a voting member of the Festival Grounds Committee, and adding a citizen voting member appointed by the Mayor (subject to Common Council approval), and to refer this recommendation to the Committee of the Whole.

RESULT:	REFERRED TO COMM. OF THE WHOLE

3. Rodeo Update

On behalf of the Lincoln County Rodeo Association, Bryan Moodie reported. All data is not yet available, but the 2019 rodeo was definitely a positive event. The weather was great, the turnout was average and the entertainment was popular. The entertainers were impressed with the grounds and facilities.

4. Fair Update

Attachment: 2019-08-01 FGC Minutes (4566 : Minutes of August 1, 2019 meeting)

Fair Association Rep. Becker reported. The fair is two weeks away. Current plans still call for the Wrestling Alumni beer tent to be relocated farther to the west. However, due to several issues related to the original new site, the tent will not be located as far west as was originally planned.

5. Calendar of Events

Krista Mitchell reported. Events for the spring of 2020 are already being booked.

Alderman Sabatke noted that the MASH blood drive held in the Bierman Building earlier in the day was highly successful.

IV. Monthly Reports:

1. Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund

The report was in the meeting packet.

The next wrestling event is scheduled for Friday, September 27th. The first wrestling event drew approximately 250 people.

The Labor Day temporary vendor agreements are being prepared.

2. Permanent Stands Rep. Caylor

The report was in the meeting packet.

V. Public Comment Period

On behalf of the V.F.W., Alderman Sabatke reported that the fair opening ceremony will be held at 5:00 P.M. on Wednesday, August 14th. Public officials and the general public are invited to attend. The ceremony will take place near the fair office.

VI. Establish date, time & location of next meeting

Thursday, September 5th, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. in the Bierman Building.

VII. Adjournment

Motion (Caylor/Becker) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 7:00 P.M.

Attachment: 2019-08-01 FGC Minutes (4566 : Minutes of August 1, 2019 meeting)

October

Cattle barn Exterior

Calendar of Events (Attachment)

Festival Grounds Manager Report – Bjorklund (Attachment)

Food Vendor Report – Caylor (Attachment)

Attachment: 10-03-2019 Agenda Items (4567 : Cattle barn exterior)

UP COMING EVENTS AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

2019

October	10-03-19	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee)
	10-5-19	Silver “M”: Club
	10-12-19	Wedding
	10-18/19-19	Enrichment Center Craft Fair**
November	11-07-2019	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
		No Events
December	11-05-2019	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
		No Events

2020

January	01-02-20	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	01-03/04-20	Gun Show**
	01-17-20	Wrestling
February	02-06-20	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee
	02-29-20	Wedding

** **Yearly Repeat Events** **

Attachment: Calendar of Events (4570 : Calendar of events)

Merrill Festival Grounds

Oct 3, 2019

Grandstand and Grounds:

General:

The asphalt has helped each event in set-up and public comfort.

A youth ATV track could be developed in conjunction with local ATV dealers; disk golf long drive contests, etc

In the process of removing snow mass from the sides of the Expo Hall building, it became impossible to do so without dragging landscape stone with the snow being removed. Future consideration to replacing the stone with another material may eliminate this problem.

Addition of lighting needs to continue to be a priority to create a safe and user-friendly environment. Raising the grandstand poles and enhancing the light clusters is a priority for safety, production and ease of operation (not having to keep refocusing). American flag is missing.

Identification and prioritization of capital improvements for the grounds is an ongoing exercise and is conducted in accord with the TIF requirements and user group needs. Projects that have improved the appearance and function of existing buildings is very noticeable and appreciated by the community and user groups.

Capital improvement categories could include: Perimeter Fence (with caution and concurrence of user groups), reduction of Humane Society footprint, paving/asphalt at the Grandstand and improved elevation between the east and west bathrooms, plantings, trees, electrical grid, winterized buildings, canopies, shade and rest areas, picnic tables, sewer and water hook-ups.

Labor Day Car Show was well attended with an increase in classic car entries. Advance booking protocols for booking of food vendors should be observed to eliminate unprofessional, marginal, obstructive and un-safe operations. Scout auction was down from last year.

Tractor Pull:

The Midstate's Pullers replaced the WTPA/NTPA. The Dirt Flingers (minis and garden tractors and specialty classes) were added with the antique Pullers for the daytime free show.

Sales were down but the show(s) were excellent.

Additional marketing and tagging of Bank advertising is a focus for the event.

Alternative format and partnerships are being considered.

Attachment: Festival Grounds Manager Report (4568 : Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund)

Rodeo:

Entrance Gate created a nice welcoming sense of arrival.
The new layout of the grounds was excellent and well received by all.
Show did a good job of watering down the entrance area and practice areas to hold down arena dust.
Commercial and concessions set-up was accomplished rapidly and was a clean presentation.
Though the intent was good the use of orange plastic barrier was not necessary. Saw horse barriers look better and accomplish the same goal.
Double check electrical load balance along the Memorial fence line.
Increase infield electrical capacity to 600 amps.
Elevate arena light poles by 20 feet and continue to add lighting across the grounds.
Obtain a hydrant hose bib (similar to the ones used by the carnival) for better hose use.
Elevate/barrier an area with hose and water for horse washing.
Put benches along the chutes for use by contestants.
VIP and handicap parking worked very well.
Parking operation in general, was excellent; the best of any event.
Consider moving the tent a few feet west to better avoid utilities.
Consider “selling” deep discount tickets for Sunday only to sponsor’s favorite charities.

County Fair:

The elimination of fencing worked very well; it was also efficient to allow the beer stands to sell wristbands at the counter.

Seek to sell, trade or barter for display space under the Grandstand, west of the carnival and east of poultry barn. Perhaps, invite the military to move displays in at no cost. Attempt to leave no empty space between the east end of the grandstand and the cattle barns. Attempt to fill all buildings

Consider active and/or participative displays such as chain saw carving, wood working, fish tank, kid’s shows, animal petting, jugglers, etc. Such shows are inexpensive, easy to book and easily fill space as needed. They give a sense of activity and fun and help to keep families at the grounds longer. Put all benches and picnic tables in areas closer to the activities.

Renovation of the restrooms was excellent. They were clean and well lit. Families appreciated it.

Review ATM vendor and fees. Require a report from the Processor of the ATMs.

Use the Expo stage for pie eating and butter carving contests and other such competitions and free programs. Work out re-scheduling use of the building to make sure the expo stage is kept busy.

Attachment: Festival Grounds Manager Report (4568 : Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund)

Open the Enrichment Center end of the Expo for passive display of projects and programs; open the gift shop to sell items to the public and hand out information to increase public awareness and participation.

The committee in charge of the livestock auction (the fair is a terminal show) has done a superb job of lining up corporate and private buyers for the auction. It is one of the better auctions in the state in the county fair category. The work done by the committee is a model for the fair to use in seeking new altruistic support, sponsorship and possible angel underwriting of specific events. Sponsor each day of the fair. Such additional support is essential to help the fair continue to be a “free fair”.

Add lights to the east and west poles in the grandstand to keep from having to refocus lights. Consider raising the height of the north grandstand poles to reduce glare into the grandstand seating. Focus heavily on general lighting throughout the grounds. Light equate to safe in attendee’s minds.

Have a heavier presence of electrician during set-up. Lock electric panels throughout the fair, reduce hose and cable crossings and cover all crossings with heavy rubber mats. Assure that the electrician contractor is bonded, certified and insured.

Bierman Expo Hall:

The first Wrestling Show produced about 250 attendees. Given the short lead time, it was an encouraging turnout. The second show on Sept 27 had increased attendance and media support. The promoter is considering a third show for a Saturday in Jan-Mar. Ryan Schwartzman has helped the promoter tremendously and the Chamber has helped with sales and marketing. New sales at County Market and Mobile helped. The event is seeking sponsorship as well as angel backers.

The Northern Wisconsin Gun Show producer gun show on Sept 13 and 14 did very well. The consensus among the exhibitors is that the move to Merrill was good for all.

Reservations for weddings are increasing monthly.

Attachment: Festival Grounds Manager Report (4568 : Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund)