

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

SEPTEMBER 1, 2021

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, September 1, 2021 at 4:15 p.m., at Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Dan Novitch, Kyle Gulke, Joan Tabor, Brian Artac, Amanda Groth (phone in), John VanLieshout and Jean Ravn

Members Excused Absent:

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Artac to approve the minutes from the August meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by VanLieshout, seconded by Artac, to approve the claims from August.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None

The next item on the agenda was to review and approve 2022 Operational Budget. Wendorf stated that the biggest change in the operational budget was having a new full time employee; otherwise the budget remains almost the same with a few small changes. Novitch questioned when the budget will get approved. Wendorf stated that by the end of November it had to be approved.

***Motion made by VanLieshout, seconded by Ravn, to approve and submit the 2022 Operational Budget to the Council as presented.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion on 2022 Capital Projects & Equipment. Wendorf presented the list in the order the Park & Recreation Commission recommended. VanLieshout stated that the full list should be submitted to the Council and let the Council decide what to approve and what to deny.

***Motion by VanLieshout, seconded by Artac to submit the Capital Projects and Equipment request for 2022 to the City Council.

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion on the new park along West Highway 64. Wendorf stated that Kyle Gulke had come out and talked about some names for the new park. Wendorf stated it would be nice to name it and then it would not need to be back on the agenda. The top three names that were picked to choose from were WI River Parkway, Council View and Loggers Landing. A vote was taken and WI River Parkway was decided for the new name of the park along West Highway 64.

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion on Forestry Ordinances. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions on the new changes for the Forestry Ordinances. Wendorf stated that if

there were no questions he would be talking with the City Attorney for a little help and guidance on the final changes proposed before submitting to the City Council for approval.

***Motion by Tabor, seconded by Artac to approve Forestry Ordinances changes made by Wendorf and approved by Park and Recreation Commission to submit to City Council for approval.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to begin discussion on potentially becoming an Ice Age Community. Wendorf stated that Kyle Gulke had the idea that with all the Ice Age Trails around the Merrill Area it would be a good idea to become an Ice Age Community. Wendorf stated that there would need to be community support and we would need to meet certain criteria to qualify, the Chamber would need to be part of this, and events would need to be hosted. Wendorf wanted to introduce this to the Park and Recreation Commission before moving forward, but thinks it would be a great thing to be involved with. The Ice Age Trail is utilized by a lot of people. Novitch questioned if this would help in getting some grants. Wendorf stated it would help. Wendorf will continue to do some research into becoming an Ice Age Community.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Wendorf stated that it has been a busy couple of months, a good busy. Wendorf stated that there were very few issues this summer. Wendorf thanked all the employees for making it a successful summer. Wendorf stated it felt good to get back to a normal summer. Wendorf stated that the department is getting ready for the fall/winter months. Ravn questioned if there would be any way to talk about maybe putting in the second driveway at the MARC stating that the driveway is so busy and sometimes dangerous for kids crossing. Wendorf stated that putting in another driveway would be very costly and suggested we look at alternative measures such as cross walks and enforcing parking so visibility is better for everyone.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 6 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Public Comment:

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by VonLieshout to adjourn at 5:03 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary