

**- PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

April 2, 2014

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, April 2, 2014 at 4:15 p.m. at the City Hall, with a public hearing at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Ralph Sturm, Dorwin Harris, Dan Novitch, Melissa Schroeder and Mike Willman.

Members Excused Absent: Brian Artac and Anne Caylor

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: Dave Johnson, Kandy Peterson, Judy Sukow, David Sukow, Don Heyel and Cory McCorkle

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Harris, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

\*\*\*Motion by Willman, seconded by Sturm, to approve the claims.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was to discuss usage and prioritization of Memorial Forest Salvage Timber Sale (referred back to Commission by the Council). Wendorf stated that Mayor Bill Bialecki would like to see some of the Memorial Forest Salvage Timber Sale money go towards a parking lot out at the MARC near the soccer fields. Wendorf stated that an estimate was given to him by Mayor Bill Bialecki, on the cost for a parking area of 150' by 250', which would park close to 80 vehicles. Wendorf stated that a few years back a petition went around in favor of a parking lot closer to the soccer fields for the handicap and the elderly. After some discussion a motion was made.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Harris, to adjust the Memorial Forest Salvage prioritization to include the recommendation from the Council and explore the idea of a parking lot at the MARC for up to \$22,000.

Willman stated that he would prefer to build a smaller parking lot and if need arises to go bigger.

\*\*\*Carried: Sturm, Schroeder and Harris

\*\*\*Nay – Willman

Wendorf stated the deductions should be: \$5,000 from the Memorial Forest continued improvements, \$5,000 from the Park Endowment Fund, \$5,000 from the Riverside Trail rehab work and \$7,000 for the fund for the Normal Park Bathrooms.

\*\*\*Motion by Willman, seconded by Schroeder, to approve the deductions given by Director Wendorf for the parking lot at the MARC and forward to Council.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve mower bids. Wendorf stated that they put the bids out and only received one bid back from Central Wisconsin Cooperative for \$21,200.

\*\*\*Motion by Sturm, seconded by Willman to approve the bid from Central Wisconsin Cooperative for \$21,200 for a new mower.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve Normal Park plaque/bench from Lincoln County retired teachers association (follow up from fall 2013 item). Wendorf stated that a drawing and pictures have been enclosed in your packets of the bench and plaque. The bench will be located on the north side of the existing flower bed. Wendorf stated they have a little more fund raising to do and the bench is being done by Tomahawk Monument.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Sturm, to approve the bench/plaque to be placed at Normal Park by the Retired Teachers Association.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve resolution of support for WDNR Stewardship Grant for development of River Bend Trail. Wendorf stated that the River Bend Trail Committee will be writing a grant for the development of the paving of the trail. The grant is due by May 1, 2014. The grant will be for \$390,000 with the foundation matching the grant 50%. Sturm questioned if the River Bend Trail Committee would be writing the grant. Wendorf stated they would. Schroeder questioned if there will be any attachments coming with the grant. Wendorf stated there would not.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Willman, to approve the resolution of support for the WDNR Stewardship Grant for the development of River Bend Trail.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports by Wendorf. Wendorf stated that the weather is not being very friendly for getting spring sports and restrooms ready. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions.

\*\*\*Motion by Willman, seconded by Schroeder to accept the monthly reports given by Director Wendorf.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2014 at 4:15p.m., in the lower level in the conference room at City Hall.

Public Comment: None

The next item was to go into closed session:

Willman – yes

Schroeder – yes

Sturm – yes

Harris – yes

Novitch – yes

Meeting reconvened into open session at 5:45. There was a short break before the public hearing at 6:00 p.m.

The next item on the agenda was a Public Hearing regarding the location of the proposed future Outdoor Swimming Pool.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Sturm, to open up the Public Hearing.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

Public Present: Erin McCarthy, Kandy Peterson, Don Heyel, David Sukow, Judy Sukow, Jill Schmunk, Karen Karow, Cody Weber, Ryan Schwartzman, Brad Bacher, Dean Haas, Greg Hartwig, Harold Schultz, Kristin Novitch, Ralph Schultz, Charlotte Peters, Jean Ravn, Collin Ludwick, Steve Hass, Gus Caylor, Crystal Duwe, Heather Duwe, David Mootz, Carol Mootz.

Wendorf went over some the pool drawings and invited the public to come up and view them. Wendorf also talked about the process that has taken place to get to this point. Novitch asked Johnson to explain what the city would be paying towards the pool. Johnson stated that the city will not be responsible for paying for the outdoor pool. This meeting is not a guarantee that a pool will be built, it is for the purpose of knowing where you would like a pool if funds can be raised to pay for the pool.

\*\*\* (No Name) Old pool liner would be around \$27,000, make it handicap accessible and open the old pool back up, was not even an option.

\*\*\*Harold Schultz – Children in the community are less and less every year, why a big water park now. Wants to know why Wausau can have 3 pools next to the river and Merrill can't. MARC is too far for kids to travel, keep the old pool open, and fix it.

\*\*\*Jill Schmunk – Who would provide transportation to the MARC for the kids? The MARC is too far for kids to walk. Bigger pool, more lifeguards, who pays for that?

\*\*\*Crystal Duwe – Who closed the old pool and why. Stay where it is, refurbish the pool and open it back up. We have to consider the safety of the kids; the MARC is too far out.

\*\*\*Cody Weber – A big pool is not feasible for Merrill, who will oversee the project.

\*\*\*Karon Karow – Stange Park, redo old pool, or build at Stange Park.

\*\*\*Gus Caylor – Was in EMS for 20 years and it is a terrible idea to put the pool at the MARC, traffic is going to fast and it is just a crazy idea. Stange Park is a nice park and should stay there. Trying to push everything out to the MARC seems like.

\*\*\*Brad Bacher – Keep old pool, Merrill does not have the money for a new pool. How many more people will it take to run a bigger pool, who pays for it.

\*\*\*David Mootz – Stange Park is the best place for the kids. Disappointed that the city did not consider putting any money aside for a new pool before closing the old pool.

\*\*\*Don Heyel – What is current capacity – 300 – reopen old pool.

\*\*\*Greg Hartwig – Why not build a splash pad, no lifeguards, will save money in the end. If you go with a pool, Stange Park.

\*\*\*Brad Bacher – Against spending money on the pool, would like this to be done by all fund raisers and volunteer work and build what you can afford.

\*\*\*Dean Haas – what was the daily usage at the old pool?

\*\*\*Wendorf – at times we were at capacity of 300.

\*\*\*Crystal Duwe – Safety first for the kids. What are we supposed to do for swimming in the summer until money is raised for a pool.

Wendorf stated that the Merrill Park and Recreation Department will be taking a bus down to Weston Aquatic Center every other Wednesday and this bus will be open to the public, you do not have to be part of the Summer Playground Program to participate in the trip. Also, PRMS pool, Council Grounds, Tug Lake, Otter Lake all have public beaches.

\*\*\*Harold Schultz – Will there be bussing to the Council Grounds and who pays for it. Talk with the motels around town to see if you can use their pools.

\*\*\*Karon Karow – I think the committee should repair the old pool and also think people need to stop thinking the government is responsible for taking care and making arrangements for their kids. Parents need to take more responsibility upon themselves.

\*\*\*Dave Sukow – the old pool is not ADA compatible that is why it was closed. It would cost too much money to make ADA compatible. The potential of lawsuits is always looming. It is imperative to comply. Not in favor of bonding and increasing taxes for this.

\*\*\*Don Heyel – what would the cost be to redo the pool

Wendorf stated it would cost between 1 and 2 million dollars.

\*\*\*Jean Ravn – would like to see the pool at the MARC. Merrill is on the move, keep it moving. Cannot expand pool or facilities if at Stange Park.

\*\*\*Charolette Peters – Would like it at Stange Park, the committee needs to make a decision and go with it. Tear the old pool down, put up a sign that says future home of new pool. More people are in favor of Stange Park than the MARC.

Novitch stated that the public hearing was closed and thanked everyone for coming and sharing their thoughts.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Sturm, to adjourn at 6:50 p.m.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith  
Recording Secretary