

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

October 5, 2016

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Mike Willman, Dave Sukow, Jean Ravn, Ben Debroux and John Burgener

Members Excused Absent: Brian Artac, Melissa Schroeder

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: Erik Pfantz, Derek Woellner, City Administrator Dave Johnson, Cade Heideman MP3, Heather O'Neill, Justin Novitshi, Steven Reed, Kyle Gulke, Ethan Ravn, Stacy Stevenson

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Burgener to approve the minutes from the March meeting minutes.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Burgener, seconded by Sukow, to approve the claims.

***Carried Unanimously.

Public Comment: None

The next item on the agenda was to discuss potential "Early Bird" season pass rates for Bierman Family Aquatic Center. Wendorf stated that he has been checking with other communities and having the passes available would make great Christmas gifts or stocking stuffers. Wendorf would like to go with a flat fee instead of a percentage like some other communities do. Wendorf recommends that from December 1 through December 30th save \$15 on the purchase of a family season pass and save \$10.00 on the purchase of an individual season pass, and from the first business day of the New Year through April 14th save \$10.00 on the purchase of a family season pass, and save \$5.00 on the purchase of an individual season pass.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Ravn to approve recommendations from Wendorf regarding the "Early Bird" season passes for the Bierman Family Aquatic Center.

***Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve 2017 Parks & Recreation Department Operating budget. Wendorf stated that the finance director Kathy Unertl provided a copy of the 2017 operating budget. Wendorf stated that there is no room for any wiggle – 0 % increase. Wendorf stated that we have to have \$3,026.00 decrease in the operating budget. Wendorf recommended to subtract a \$1,000.00 from Self & Non-support – expenses, increase Marc revenue from \$72,400 to \$73,400, and Wendorf stated he has talked with the County and the license fees for the Aquatic Center will not be as much as this year so that would be a savings of \$1,218. Sukow asked if Normal Park restoration cost was figured in on the budget. Wendorf stated that would be in capital improvements. Wendorf also said that the aquatic centers expenses would not be as much for next year since all the supplies and equipment have been purchased in the first year. Sukow questioned if there will be any timber sales this year. Wendorf

stated there will be, stated that Rich LaVally will be taking care of laying out the sale and bidding.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Burgener to approve the 2017 Parks and Recreation Department Operating budget.

***Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was a continued discussion on potential skate park locations. After going through the list of parks with pros and cons Wendorf stated that he has been looking into the best possible place for the skateboard park and his suggestion would be the Merrill Festival Grounds. Wendorf stated that there is more than enough room, parking would work great and room for expansion. Wendorf provided an aerial photo of the Festival Grounds and mapped out a location for the skate park. City Administrator Johnson did not think the skate park would work at the Festival Grounds, that there would be conflict with other events. City Administrator Johnson stated that in the near future the city may have an opportunity to purchase the old Legion building across from the Library and feels that would be a good location for the skate park. Burgener stated he feels a location needs to be chosen and then recommends a public hearing regarding location in January of 2017. After some discussion parks that the commission would recommend for the skate park are Streeter Square, Old Legion area, and Memorial ice rink, with permission from the county. A Public meeting will be held in January regarding location.

The next item on the agenda was monthly board reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. City Administrator Johnson asked if bench was being replaced at Normal Park. Wendorf stated that it will be covered under insurance and is on order. Wendorf went over Aquatic Center numbers. Wendorf stated that he received a Stewardship Grant.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Burgener to approve the monthly board report given by Wendorf.

***Carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2016 at 4:15 p.m. at the Smith Center.

Public comment: Eric Pfantz asked what happened with the River Rat. Wendorf stated that it rotted out and will be replaced. Heather O'Neill questioned if any of the commission looked at the information she gave them in regards to the skate park. Heather stated that she does not agree with any of the locations. Heather stated that she put a lot of time and effort into working on skate park information. Heather stated that if this is built in the right location a lot of people would be at the skate park on a daily basis. Derek Woellner said he thought a good location would be down by the Weinbrenner parking lot by River Bend Trail. Gulke questioned when the Totem Pole at Normal will be moved. Derek Woellner asked why Stange Park would be a better location than Kitchenette for green space for picnics for families.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Burgener to adjourn at 5:30 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary