

## PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

August 7, 2013

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, August 7, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. at the City Hall.

Members Present: Dan Novitch, Mike Willman, Ralph Sturm, Dorwin Harris, Brian Artac, Melissa Schroeder

Members Excused Absent: Anne Caylor

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: John Annis, Judy Woller, Dewy Pfister, Ryan Schwartzman, Steve Hass, Melody Hamlin from Becher/Hoppe, Candy Peterson, Dave Sukow, Mary Ball, Todd Annis, Joy Annis, Don Heyel, Carol Heyel

\*\*\*Motion by Artac, seconded by Sturm, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Artac, to approve the June claims.

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

\*\*\*Artac questioned the bill for the infield mix. Artac thought the price was a little high for infield mix. Wendorf stated that it was two pallets.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was to review/approve City Forest Timber sale bid. Wendorf stated that WDNR Forester Rich Lavalley bid out the sale and only had one bid turned in. Wendorf stated that the bid was over the amount that they were hoping for, which is good. The bid received came from Futurewood Cooperation for \$39,291.25. Wendorf stated that he would like to start a non-lapsing account with some of the money from the tree sale so that the money would be there for improvements to the Merrill City Forest. After some discussion Steve Hass, president of the Council stated that he did not think the non-lapsing account would happen and the money has to go back into the general fund. Novitch stated that maybe a request or motion to start a non-lapsing account could be done in a future meeting. Wendorf stated that he would talk with Kathy Unertl on what the policy for this would be.

\*\*\*Motion by Artac, seconded by Sturm to approve the bid from Futurewood Cooperation for \$39,291.25.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve Lions Park Restroom renovation bid. Wendorf stated that three bids were received for the project. Finnegan Construction, Merrill bid \$38,480, Eagle Construction, Wisconsin Rapids bid \$48,680 and J & J Lee Construction, Merrill bid \$44,392. Wendorf recommended accepting the bid from Finnegan Construction for \$38,480.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Willman to accept the bid from Finnegan Construction for \$38,480.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was an update on bicycle & pedestrian facilities grant. Wendorf stated that he has been working with North Central Regional Planning Commission and they have been looking at what we have and will put a plan together to take little steps to get the project completed. Wendorf stated that they will need to put a committee together of about 10-15 people including business owners, medical staff, moms and dads and community volunteers. Wendorf stated that this process may take a little longer but will be worth it. Willman stated that two years ago a Downtown Bike Route was passed by the Council, what happened with that project and how will it fit into the new project. Wendorf stated that the project could be amended and added to the new grant that they are currently working on. Wendorf stated that he will continue working on the project and will report more details back to the commission.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss parking at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex. Wendorf stated that this has been discussed in the past. The biggest concern with parking is the walk from the vehicles to the soccer fields. Wendorf stated that some handicap parking stalls were put in next to the driveway on MARC Drive for the concession stand. Steve Hass stood up and talked about the parking and where a potential parking lot could be put in at the MARC. Hass stated that a parking lot could be put in on the north side of the Smith Center, currently there is nothing there and would make a great parking area plus it would be closer for a lot of people. Mayor Bialecki stated that 3 years ago a petition was signed by over 500 people to address the parking issues out at the MARC. City Administrator Dave Johnson is wondering if it would be possible to continue a road, include a parking area, on the north side of the Smith Center, which would connect to Marc Drive. Wendorf was requested to get some more information on different parking options and bring them back to the commission at the next Park and Recreation meeting.

The next item on the agenda was the monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions on his monthly reports. Wendorf stated that all of the summer help will be done by August 27. Summer went good with park reservations and programs. Some events coming up were the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Summer Stride and the Park and Recreation Department would also be participating in the Crazy Daze events. Sturm questioned Wendorf to who pays for the bills from Becher/Hoppe because he has never seen one on the bills to be approved by the commission. Wendorf stated that they are paid by the general fund. Sturm stated when Kathy Unertl was in a previous meeting she stated that the bills for Becher/Hoppe were paid through an anonymous donor. Sturm requested that he would like to see a break down of all bills for the Park and Recreation Department on what they have paid Becher/Hoppe for the projects they have done.

\*\*\*Motion by Willman, seconded by Artac, to accept the monthly report given by Wendorf.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for September 4, 2013 at 4:15 p.m., at the City Hall.

Dan Novitch stated at this time he would request a motion to begin the Public Hearing regarding the location of the proposed future Outdoor Swimming Pool.

\*\*\*Motion by Willman, seconded by Artac, to begin the Public Hearing regarding the location of the proposed future Outdoor Swimming Pool.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

Wendorf stated the reasons for closing the old pool and now it is time to begin focusing on a site for the future outdoor swimming pool. Wendorf stated that three sites have been chosen at this time for review and Melody from Becher/Hoppe would talk about the proposed sites. Melody from Becher/Hoppe stated that the three sites for the potential pool would include Streeter Square, Stanges Park and the MARC. Melody presented drawing and pros and cons for each location being considered. Open for discussion:

\*\*Don Heyel, 1005 N. Memorial Drive, missed the pool this year and stated that he though better planning could have been done to prevent Merrill from not having an outdoor pool at all. Heyel stated that he thought the MARC was the best option for the pool because of all the room and parking out there. It is also a nice way to showcase the beautiful facility out there. Heyel stated that you have the opportunity to make this something special, take advantage of it.

\*\*Mayor Bill Bialecki, the City owns all the land which is good, Mayor Bialecki feels the pool should stay in a central location so everyone can utilize it. Mayor Bialecki stated that putting the park at Streeter Square would give everyone access to the pool. Mayor Bialecki stated that he would eventually like to see the old pool turned into a skate board park for the kids in the community. Dislike the MARC.

\*\*Mary Ball, 1701 Cotter Ave, does not like the idea of putting the pool at Street Square, would need to be smaller. She would like to see the pool go back to the Stange Park. She feels that the MARC is too far out. Having a pool is important to the public. Gives life to the city.

\*\*Ryan Schwartzman, 401 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, would like to see the pool either at Stange Park or the MARC. Ryan would like the MARC best because it would involve the least amount of work. Stange Park is in the flood plain and Streeter Square is too small. Ryan stated that maybe a deal could be made with the Merrill Go Round on bussing for the pool.

\*\*Steve Hass, 702 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, would like to see the pool at Streeter Square, central location and equal distance for everyone.

\*\*Noel Busher, W3656 Cty Hwy P, believes the MARC is a good location. Noel stated that over 240 girls played ball at the MARC this summer and everyone either found a ride or their parents brought them out there. If the pool is there people will find a way to get there.

\*\*Dave Sukow, 1901 Webster Street, said his 6<sup>th</sup> ward constituents said anywhere but the MARC. Stange or Streeter Square is a good location and both have parking.

\*\*Todd Annis, 2405 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Streeter Square is not a good location, no parking and a busy street for the kids to be crossing. Stange Park would be the best location; MARC is too hard to get to.

\*\*Dave Johnson, 1010 Johnson Street, daughter just wants a pool, would like to see the pool at Streeter Square; it is a good central location. Draw for the downtown.

\*\*Joy Annis, 2405 W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Streeter Square would be too dangerous for the kids crossing the road. Stange or the MARC would be a good location. Kids in Merrill need a pool.

\*\*\*Willman made a motion, Artac seconded to close the Public Hearing at 6:25 p.m.

Public Comment:

Vicky Lundstrum questioned if anyone had talked with the churches or the funeral home to see how they felt about an outdoor pool being placed at Streeter Square. Vicky stated that someone should talk with them before a decision is made.

Mary Ball stated that a decision needs to be made soon.

\*\*\*Motion by Artac, seconded by Willman, to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith  
Recording Secretary