

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

December 7, 2016

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Mike Willman, Dave Sukow, Jean Ravn, Ben Debroux, Brian Artac, Melissa Schroeder and John Burgener

Members Excused Absent:

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Cade Heidemann MP3, Heather O'Neill, Mark Wisinski, Swiderski Equipment, Gene Bebel, Mayor Bill Bialecki, Kyle Gulke and Ryan Grieser

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Artac to approve the minutes from the November meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

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

***Carried Unanimously.

Public Comment: Mayor Bill Bialecki stated that he wants to see Stange Park taken off the list for potential skate park location. Mayor Bialecki stated that he would like to see Stange Park utilized for reservations with new bathrooms and a facility similar to Kitchenette Park.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss and finalize locations for potential skate park.

***Motion by Burgener, seconded by Sukow to take Stange Park off the list for potential skate park location.

Burgener stated that he would like to see Stange Park turned into another Kitchenette Park utilizing it for park reservations.

***Carried 6 – 1 with opposing vote from Mike Willman.

***Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Burgener to take Streeter Square off the list for potential skate park locations.

Melissa stated that there is no parking there and also it is more of a residential area. Sukow stated that does not leave many places left for location because the County stated that they do not want the skate park built where the current ice rink is located at Memorial. Sukow stated that he received phone calls regarding concerns about having the skate park down by the River Bend Trail with it not being very visible in that area.

***Carried 5 – 2 with opposing vote from Mike Willman and Dave Sukow.

Wendorf stated that the only areas left were the Festival Grounds, the American Legion site and the parking lot down by the River Bend Trail. City Administrator Johnson stated the he did not

want the skate park at the Festival Grounds because there was no room for it down there. He also stated that it would be at least 2 years before you could do anything at the American Legion site. Mayor Bill Bialecki stated that he will fight tooth and nail to not have the skate park at the Festival Grounds.

***Motion by Burgener, seconded by Sukow to remove the Festival Grounds from the list of potential areas for the skate park.

***Carried 5 – 2 with opposing votes from Mike Willman and Ben Debroux.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Burgener to approve the site by River Street municipal parking area for the skate park and send to Public Works to approve and send to Common Council for approval.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve public participation process for potential skate park. Willman stated that there is nothing to discuss since the commission decided on one location.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve bids for the purchase of utility tractor for Parks Department. Wendorf stated that 3 bids came in for a tractor. Riesterer & Schnell Inc. from Antigo bid \$83,396.00 with options, Service Motor Company bid \$70,625.00 with options and Swiderski Equipment Inc bid \$66,605.00 with options. Wendorf stated that he would recommend Swiderski Equipment Inc. and would like approval to add a couple more safety options but would not exceed the \$70,000.00 that was granted to the Parks Department.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Artac to accept the bid from Swiderski Equipment Inc. and to add on a couple safety features but not to exceed \$70,000.00.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was to recommend eliminating River Bend Trail maintenance charges to River District Development Foundation from the Parks Department. (River Bend Trail is officially recognized as a Linear City Park) Wendorf stated that they currently do the maintenance on the trail now and won't impact the budget because city employees performing normal work in a Linear City Park already.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Schroeder to recommend eliminating River Bend Trail maintenance charges to River District Development Foundation from the Parks Department.

Sukow questioned who would receive the money from the cell tower. City Administrator Johnson stated the River District Development Foundation would.

***Carried unanimously. Mike Willman abstained from casting vote.

The next item on the agenda was to recommend the City of Merrill self-perform trail base work on new construction from Kyes St. to Cooper St. with the River District Development Foundation paying for the paving and finishing work on that section of trail. Wendorf stated that there are two sources of funding for this part of the trail, the Stewardship Grant and also help from the Street Department. Sukow questioned if the land was ready for work or if they will run

into any problems with any clean up. Mike Willman stated that the land is clear and ready for work. Wendorf stated that all costs will be covered by grant.

***Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Burgener to recommend the City of Merrill self-perform trail base work on new construction from Kyes St. to Cooper St. with the River District Development Foundation paying for the paving and finishing work on that section of trail.

***Carried unanimously. Mike Willman abstained from voting

The next item on the agenda was to recommend the City of Merrill contribute an operational donation, on an annual basis, to the River District Development Foundation. Wendorf stated that this would be a yearly donation the River District Development Foundation would or could ask for. Sukow stated that the amount is at the mercy of the Common Council.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Burgener to recommend the City of Merrill contribute an operational donation, on an annual basis, to the River District Development Foundation.

***Carried unanimously. Mike Willman abstained from voting.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve grant awards from Stewardship Fund and Recreational Trail Aids for River Bend Trail East expansion project. Wendorf stated that they were awarded \$83,342 from the Stewardship Grant and \$30,408 from the Recreational Trail Aids program.

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Ravn to approve the grant awards from Stewardship Fund and Recreational Trail Aids for the River Bend Trail and to be forwarded to the Common Council for approval.

***Carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was an update on final 2017 Operational and Capital Budget results. Wendorf stated there was a 0% increase for the budget. For capital improvements the Park and Recreation Department was approved for everything but Stange Park project, Prairie Trails pit toilet, and Athletic park parking lot.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. No questions. Wendorf stated he would like to thank all the employees of the Park and Recreation Department. Willman asked if any pool passes are being sold.

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Ravn to approve the monthly board report submitted by Wendorf.

***Carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 4, 2017 at 4:15 p.m. at the City Hall.

Public comment: Heather O'Neal presented some pictures of some skateboard parks and stated that she really thinks the skate park will benefit the community. She also stated that as soon as she receives her 501C3 number for nonprofit she will begin fund raising now that a site has been approved. O'Neal stated that she has been contacted by a couple businesses that are interested in donating. Gene Bebel stated that he would like to thank the commission for all their support and help with the River Bend Trail.

***Motion by Sukow, seconded by Ravn to adjourn at 5:20 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary