



**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES • THURSDAY APRIL 6, 2017**

**Regular Meeting**

**City Hall Council Chambers**

**6:00 PM**

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Bialecki called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Rob Norton	Alderman - Seventh District	Present	
Tim Meehan	Alderman - Eighth District	Present	
Bill Bialecki	Mayor	Present	
Paul Russell	Alderman - First District	Present	
Neal Christensen	Food Vendor Rep.	Present	
Dale Christiansen	Fair Assn. Rep.	Present	
Bryan Bloch	Rodeo Assn. Rep.	Present	

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Festival Grounds Manager Richard Bjorklund, Alderwoman Kandy Peterson, Jimmy Lawson, Pearl Sabatke, Les Sabatke, Darrell Barker, Mike Geisler, Bryan Plautz, Dick Stoeckmann, Sue Kunkel, Carrie Cordova, Lillie Bartelt, Trina Delasky, Shelly Storm, Bryan Moodie, Brad Becker, Josh Gruenberg, Casey McColloch, Cindi Christiansen, Joe Schfelbein, Diane Wais and City Clerk Bill Heideman.

**II. Minutes of previous meeting(s):**

**1. Minutes of March 2, 2017 meeting**

Before the minutes were considered, Alderman Norton reported that incorrect dates for the 2017 Lincoln County Fair were verbally provided at the last meeting. The correct dates are July 26-30, 2017.

Motion (Meehan/Russell) to approve the minutes.

<b>RESULT: APPROVED</b>
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**III. Agenda items for consideration:**

**1. Optimist Club request - "Empty Bowls"**

Representing the Merrill Optimist Club, Sherry Storm explained their plans for holding an "Empty Bowls" event at the Expo Center. This event would require the use of the kitchen. Funds raised would be used to help support the "Food for Kids" program.

The tentative date for this event in 2017 is June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Optimist Club would like to have this event in conjunction with the opening of the Expo Hall.

The Optimist Club is requested a waiver of the lease fee for this event.

Motion (Bialecki/Christiansen) to approve the fee waiver request.

**RESULT: APPROVED**

## 2. Merrill Riders Club Proposal Letter

A fee proposal from the Merrill Riders Club for 2017 events was in the meeting packet. Representing the Merrill Riders Club, Jimmy Lawson addressed the committee and provided information. The Riders Club is proposing the full fee (\$250) for the first event, and a graduated 15% decrease for each subsequent 2017 event.

Alderman Meehean responded that the City established the fees based on their need to recover expenses, and, in his opinion, the \$250 fee per event is not cost prohibitive. Alderman Meehean also expressed concerns that, when the Riders Club has an event on a Friday, it could interfere with other groups being able to use the facilities during the same weekend.

Alderman Russell stated that he could support some type of gradual reduction in the fee during the year, contingent upon the fact that it would be for 2017 only.

City Attorney Hayden suggested that constantly adjusting fees for various groups could set a bad precedent.

Neal Christensen expressed his opinion that it is a good proposal.

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to establish the 2017 fee for the Riders Club at \$200 per event. In 2018, the fee for event would be revert back to the fee that other groups are paying per event for this type of lease (currently \$250).

**RESULT: APPROVED**

## 3. Fair Association Lease Agreement

The lease agreement document was distributed at the meeting.

Alderman Norton suggested that the rent amount in paragraph #4 be reduced from \$2,500 to \$1,000. Dale Christiansen stated the the Fair Association has already been forced to make cuts in fair activities, and they would certainly prefer to pay \$1,000 rather than \$2,500.

A "Proposed Template for 30 Day Letter" document was distributed and discussed. The number of days in paragraph #2 of that document was discussed. Neal Christensen suggested 90 days. There was no objection to changing it from 15 days to 90 days. No formal action was taken on this document.

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to approve the Fair Association Lease Agreement, as presented.

**RESULT: APPROVED**

## 4. Expo Lease Agreement

The fee for events lasting several days was discussed. It was suggested that, for events lasting more than four days, language be added to allow the fee for the fifth day and any subsequent days to be negotiable. There was no objection to adding that language.

Alcohol sales on the grounds were discussed. At the next meeting, City Attorney Hayden will present a report on this subject.

Motion (Bialecki/Meehean) to approve the Expo Lease Agreement, with the addition of the language discussed earlier.

**RESULT: APPROVED**

**5. Grounds Lease Agreement**

Motion (Meehean/Bloch) to approve the agreement as presented.

**RESULT: APPROVED**

**6. Cattle Barn Rental**

City Administrator Johnson reported that the cattle barn is nearly full, making it impractical for anyone to lease the cattle barn at this time.

No action was necessary, requested or taken.

**7. Hazardous Waste Collection Report**

Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund reported that the “Good News” group has requested a fee waiver for a waste collection event they will be having in the Sell Building in August. This was a verbal request only.

This group does make money at their events, but in turn they donate the money for use in impoverished countries.

Motion (Meehean/Russell) to approve the fee waiver request for 2017, contingent upon submission and approval of the necessary paperwork.

**RESULT: APPROVED**

**8. Update - Fencing Around Stands Serving Alcohol**

City Administrator Johnson reported that the Police Chief would have no objection to not requiring fencing during the fair, as long as enforcement using wristbands was in place.

Dale Christiansen stated that he was in favor of retaining the fencing requirement for the fair, at least for now.

The Lincoln County Fair Association has the authority to require/not require fencing during the fair.

No action was taken.

**9. Update - Fencing Around Festival Grounds**

City Administrator Johnson reported that, based on a quote received, it would cost \$40,000 to \$50,000 to fence the entire grounds. There are no funds in the current City budget for fencing. It was noted that some fencing now on hand could be used for this purpose.

No action was taken.

#### 10. Deposit Clarification on Return of Fees

Neal Christensen asked for clarification on policies related to security deposits. He was told that only one security deposit is required, regardless of the number of days of any lease. The premises will be inspected after every event, and if the inspection proves the premises acceptable, 100% of the security deposit will be returned to the user.

No action was necessary, requested or taken.

#### 11. Finance Report 2016 Tractor Pull

The report was in the packet for information only.

No action was necessary, requested or taken.

#### 12. Fair Dates and Update - Calendar of 2017

Dale Christiansen provided a verbal report on the upcoming events/shows at the 2017 Lincoln County Fair, as follows:

The 4-H horse show will be held on the evening of Wednesday, July 26<sup>th</sup>. This show will be held in front of the grandstand, and admission will be free.

On the evenings of Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> and Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. "Bulls and Barrels" will be the grandstand shows. These shows will feature bull-riding and barrel-jumping. Admission will be \$10.

The 4-H dog show will be held on the morning of Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup>. Admission will be free.

A Demolition Derby will be held in front of the grandstand on the evening of Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup>. Admission will be \$10.

Sunday night, July 30<sup>th</sup> will feature a "Monster Truck Show" in front of the grandstand. Admission will be \$10.

#### IV. Public Comment Period

Alderman Norton thanked all the meeting attendees.

#### V. Establish date, time and location of next meeting

Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. in the City Hall Common Council Chambers.

#### VI. Adjournment

Motion (Russell/Meehan) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 7:26 P.M.