



**CITY OF MERRILL**  
**FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES • THURSDAY JUNE 1, 2017**

**Regular Meeting**

**Bierman Building**

**6:00 PM**

I. Call to Order

Alderman Norton 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	Excused	
Bill Bialecki	Mayor	Excused	
Paul Russell	Alderman - First District	Present	
Neal Christensen	Food Vendor Rep.	Present	
Dale Christiansen	Fair Assn. Rep.	Present	
Bryan Bloch	Rodeo Assn. Rep.	Present	

Other attendees included: City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Alderwoman Kandy Peterson, Sue Gleason, Cindi Christiansen, Dick Stoeckmann, Mike Geisler, John Rathke, Cameo Roets, Samantha Roets, Pete Annis, Ted Ley, Gordon Smukowski, James Kreger, Sue Kunkel, Randy Wixson and City Clerk Bill Heideman.

II. Minutes of previous meeting(s):

1. Minutes of May 4, 2017 meeting

Alderman Norton requested that all past meeting minutes, with the exception of the March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 meeting, be amended to include Diane Wais as a meeting attendee.

Motion (Russell/Christiansen) to approve, including the amendments requested by Alderman Norton.

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

1. Rodeo Activities Update - Bryan Bloch

Setup up for the rodeo will begin June 4<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers to help are both needed and welcome.

Bryan Bloch provided a preview of the rodeo, as follows:

Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup>: Rodeo Queen Pageant at the Eagles.

Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup>: Brickner's will be having a test-drive opportunity. A rodeo performance will be held at 7:00 P.M.

Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>: An antique tractor pull will begin at noon. A rodeo performance will be held at 6:30 P.M.

Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup>: Contestants unable to compete in the main rodeo events will have an event at 9:00 A.M. The queen coronation will be held at noon. A rodeo performance will be held at 1:00 P.M.

Bryan Bloch then provided verbal statistics on the number of entries in various rodeo categories.

## 2. Lincoln County Fair Five Year Plan - Dale Christiansen

Dale Christiansen reported that, at this time, the five-year plan for the fair is to just “survive”. He said that a successful 2017 fair is critical, and that, if the fair is not successful, “that might be it”.

Mr. Christiansen then reported that he has recently accepted a new position working for the Central Wisconsin State Fair. Due to this development, he will be resigning from the Lincoln County Fair Association sometime after the 2017 fair.

The Lincoln County Fair Association will need to select a new representative for the Festival Grounds Committee, as Mr. Christiansen will also be resigning from that group.

## 3. Report on Expo Center alcohol sales - City Attorney Tom Hayden

Questions have been raised about the possibility of selling liquor at Expo Center events. Although temporary Class “B” picnic licenses allow for the sale of beer (and wine, if applied for), this type of license does not allow liquor sales.

City Attorney Hayden suggested that one way to address this would be to enter into an agreement with an entity to handle liquor sales at the Expo Center. This entity would apply to the City for a Class “B” beer license. Upon approval of that license, the entity would in turn apply for and receive a retail alcohol beverage permit from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. This would be similar to the current license/permit arrangement that the City has with Merrill Hockey Inc., to cover beer and liquor sales at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex (MARC).

Research on this possibility will continue, and it is possible that a Request for Proposal for such an agreement might be ready for consideration at the July meeting.

No action was taken at this time.

## 4. Scheduling of Club/Food Vendor Events for Calendar - Picnic Licenses

Diane Wais reminded permanent vendors that they should notify her prior to holding an event at their facility on the grounds. She also issued a reminder that temporary Class “B” (picnic) license(s) are required for any permanent vendor events that involve beer and/or wine.

Verbal information on the upcoming events calendar was provided.

#### 5. Discussion on August 5th Expo Center Event

Representing Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 1638, Sue Gleason reported that the VFW is planning a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at the Festival Grounds on August 5<sup>th</sup>. Weather permitting, the event will be held outdoors, but, with the possibility of rain, the VFW is considering using the Expo Center if the weather dictates an indoor event.

Motion (Christensen/Russell) to waive the entire Expo Hall rental fee for the VFW anniversary celebration scheduled for August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The \$250 security deposit would remain in effect.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
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#### 6. Discussion on 2018 Pork in the Park

Representing the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce, Randy Wixson reported on the annual Pork in the Park event. The 2017 Pork in the Park event is scheduled to be held at the MARC, but the Chamber of Commerce is planning on moving the 2018 event to the Festival Grounds. Mr. Wixson noted that the Chamber of Commerce is a non-profit entity and that they are hoping for a waiver or reduction in the rental fee for the 2018 event.

Motion (Russell/Bloch) to reduce the Festival Grounds rental fee by 50% (currently \$250, would be reduced to \$125) for the 2018 Pork in the Park event to be held in September, 2018.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
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#### 7. Continue discussion of Festival Grounds as potential campground

City Administrator Johnson stated that he is opposed to using the Festival Grounds as a permanent campground. He is not opposed to the current policy of allowing camping as part of an event.

Alderman Russell stated his opinion that consideration of a campground should be delayed until 2018, at which time the 2018 schedule/calendar will be clearer. He added his opinion that, at this time, creating a campground should not be a high City priority.

Bryan Bloch stated that he disagrees with some of Dave Johnson's comments. He hopes that, at some future date, the campground possibility could be revisited.

#### IV. Public Comment Period

Alderman Norton thanked everyone who attended the meeting, and announced that tours of the Bierman Building and the new rodeo facility would be available after the meeting.

Dave Christiansen raised a concern related to sidewalk on the grounds.

Bryan Bloch expressed disappointment that the only item on the Festival Grounds portion of the City website is the calendar. He hopes that additional information as well as pictures will be added soon. In response, Alderman Russell suggested the possibility of providing organizations an opportunity to submit pictures for inclusion the website.

**V. Establish date, time & location of next meeting**

City Clerk Heideman stated that he was contacted by several people who expressed concerns that the Bierman Building is not equipped to live-stream meetings. These people stated that, in the interest of transparency, they wanted Festival Grounds Committee meetings held in the City Hall Common Council Chambers. This would allow the public to not only watch the meetings live, but would also provide a video recording of the meeting for later public viewing.

Alderman Norton stated that he preferred having meetings at the Bierman Building, and then announced that the next meeting will be Thursday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 6:00 P.M. at the Bierman Building.

**VI. Adjournment**

Motion (Russell/Christensen) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:58 P.M.