



CITY OF MERRILL
FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
AGENDA • THURSDAY JULY 12, 2018

Regular Meeting

Bierman Building

6:00 PM

- I. Call to Order
- II. Minutes of previous meeting(s):
 1. Minutes of June 7, 2018 meeting
- III. Agenda items for consideration:
 1. Rodeo debriefing report
 2. Tractor Pull debriefing report
 3. Fair update
 4. Calendar of Events/Feedback
 5. Recycling
 6. 2019 Capital Improvements/Budget Items
- IV. Monthly Reports:
 1. Food Vendor Rep. Caylor
 2. Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund
- V. Public Comment Period
- VI. Establish date, time and location of next meeting
- VII. Adjournment



CITY OF MERRILL
FESTIVAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE
MINUTES • THURSDAY JUNE 7, 2018

Regular Meeting Bierman Building 6:00 PM

I. Call to Order

Alderman Norton called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Table with 4 columns: Attendee Name, Title, Status, Arrived. Rows include Michael Caylor, Rob Norton, Tim Meehean, John M. Van Lieshout, Derek Woellner, Bryan Bloch, and Brad Becker.

Also in attendance: City Administrator Dave Johnson, City Attorney Tom Hayden, Festival Grounds Manager Richard Bjorklund, Diane Wais, Neil Christensen, Bill Bialecki, Kandy Peterson, Darryl Barker (arr. 6:18) and City Clerk Bill Heideman. A student was in attendance to tape the meeting for Merrill Productions.

II. Minutes of previous meeting(s):

1. Minutes of May 3, 2018 meeting

Motion (Bloch/Meehean) to approve.

RESULT: APPROVED

III. Agenda items for consideration:

1. Rodeo update

Rodeo Assn. Rep. Bloch reported that preparations are going well. All City departments involved have been "super" in helping with pre-rodeo duties. Verbal data on the number of entries was provided. The St. Francis food stand will not be open for the rodeo, but the St. John food stand will be open.

2. Tractor Pull update

City Administrator Johnson reported that the new bathrooms being constructed will be open in time for the tractor pull.

3. Fair update

Fair Assn. Rep. Becker reported that work continues on contracts and on advertising. He noted that all carnival rides will be state-inspected prior to the fair.

4. Calendar of Events/Feedback

The calendar was in the meeting packet.

Diane Wais reported that, as the result of a cancellation, two weekends in July are now open.

Attachment: 2018-06-07 FGC Minutes (3427 : Minutes of June 7, 2018 meeting)

The Riders Club has already held one event at the grounds this year, with a favorable number in attendance.

The prom and the ACT testing at the Bierman Building both went well this year, and both will return in 2019.

An annual events schedule was distributed.

5. Discussion on "stand retirement"

Food Vendor Rep. Caylor had requested that this item be placed on the agenda. He has questions about policies and procedures that would be necessary if one of the permanent stands wanted to transfer their facility to another group.

It was noted that the buildings are owned by the groups, but the land that the buildings occupy is owned by the City. In case of a proposed transfer of a stand, Festival Grounds Committee approval would be required.

IV. Monthly Reports:

1. Food Vendor Rep. Caylor

The report was in the meeting packet.

Alderman Norton thanked Food Vendor Rep. Caylor for providing the Food Vendor group meeting minutes.

Food Vendor Rep. Caylor suggested that a discussion of recycling be an item on the July meeting agenda.

2. Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund

The report was in the meeting packet.

Festival Grounds Manager Bjorklund reported that a Tractor Pull meeting was held on June 7th.

Work continues on a digital sign that will be installed on the freeway. It will help promote events on the grounds as well as other community events.

Installation/replacement of lighting on the grounds continues. Rodeo Association Rep. Bloch suggested that, sometime in the future, additional lighting be installed on the east end of the grounds.

Several event promoters have toured the grounds recently.

Darryl Barker asked whether it would possible to rent the bathrooms for a winter event. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

V. Public Comment Period

Bill Bialecki commented that at the time the City assumed ownership of the grounds (three years ago), it would have been difficult to imagine all that has been accomplished at the grounds since.

Neil Christensen speculated that it might be difficult to enforce “no smoking” on the grounds. In response, Alderman Meehean suggested that consideration of tobacco use on the grounds should be a future agenda item.

City Clerk Heideman remarked that at times, the committee “wanders” from the agenda and discusses issues that are not even on the agenda. He suggested that, to prevent this, potential agenda items should be submitted prior to the meetings so that they can be placed on the agenda.

Bill Bialecki disagreed with City Clerk Heideman. In his opinion, it is acceptable for a municipal governing body to “wander” from the agenda, as long as no action is taken on any non-agenda items discussed.

VI. Establish date, time and location of next meeting

Thursday, July 12th, 2018 at 6:00 P.M. at the Bierman Building.

VII. Adjournment

Motion (Van Lieshout/Meehean) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

From: [Wais, Diane](#)
To: [Heideman, Bill](#)
Cc: [Norton, Rob](#); [Woellner, Derek](#); [Johnson, David](#)
Subject: Festival Grounds Meeting Agenda
Date: Tuesday, July 03, 2018 9:19:14 AM
Attachments: [07-12-18 mtg UP.COMING EVENTS AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS.docx](#)
[Copy of 2019 Festival Grounds Capital Plan.xlsx](#)
[071218 Merrill Festival Grounds Report.docx](#)

JULY

Rodeo – debriefing report

Tractor Pull – debriefing report

Fair – Update

Calendar of Events/Feedback (Attachment)

Recycling

2019 Capital Improvements / Budget Items (Attachment)

Food Vendor Report – Caylor

Festival Grounds Manager Report – Bjorklund (Attachment)

Attachment: Agenda items (3428 : Rodeo debriefing report)

UP COMING EVENTS AT THE FESTIVAL GROUNDS

JULY	07-07-18	Tractor Pull	ARENA
	07-07-18	Wedding	
	07-12-17	Festival Grounds Committee Meeting	
	07-20-18	Riders Club	ARENA
	7-27, 7-28	Wedding	
AUGUST	08-02-18	(Festival Grounds Committee Meeting) to be set by Committee	
	08-3/08-4	Relay for Life	GROUND
	08-10-18	Riders Club	ARENA
	08-15/08-19	FAIR with set up and take down the month of August	
	08-31-18	Riders Club	ARENA
SEPT.	09-01-2018	Wedding	
	09-03-18	Labor Day Activities after Parade	GROUND
	09/14 & 09-15	NRA Gun Show	
	09-15-18	Pork in the Park	
	09-22-18	Wedding	
	09-29-18	Wedding	
Oct.	10/12, 13, 14	Wedding	
	10/19, 20	Craft Show – Enrichment Center	
	10/27	Flea Market	

OTHER EVENTS

The Riders Club will be putting on (6) Friday shows in the Arena. They will be held on May 18th, June 15th, July 20th, August 10th, August 31, and September 14th.

4-H Dog Training will be held on the Grounds on June 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th, July 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th, and August 6th.

This will be sent out in the packets for the July meeting.

Attachment: Calendar of Events (3431 : Calendar of Events/Feedback)

10 Year Capital Plan - Merrill Festival Grounds

PROJECT	Notes	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Grounds Lighting		\$50,000									
Grounds Wiring		\$50,000									
Entry Gate and signs					\$30,000						
New Restroom (Demo existing South RR)		\$170,000									
Add clay to track		\$10,000									
Re-side Steckling Building		\$30,000		\$30,000							
Northwest Restroom renovation			\$40,000								
Cattle Barn doors & Partial siding replacement				\$35,000							
Landscaping (trees out in spring 2018)					\$10,000						
Grounds fencing					\$60,000						
Pavement replacement						\$150,000					
Cattle Barn re-paint								\$20,000			
Lights on east end of grounds			\$20,000								
SW restroom - new sinks, stools & stalls			\$40,000								

Attachment: Capital Improvements Budget (3433 : 2019 Capital Improvements/Budget Items)

10 Year Capital Plan - Merrill Festival Grounds

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Grounds Lighting		\$50,000									
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Landscaping					\$10,000						
Grounds fencing					\$60,000						
Pavement replacement						\$150,000					
Cattle Barn re-paint								\$20,000			

Attachment: Capital Improvements Budget (3433 : 2019 Capital Improvements/Budget Items)

June 2018 Permanent Stands Minutes

June 28th, 2018

The meeting was called to order by the chair Mike Caylor at 6:42 PM

Present: Jerry Leopold – Eagle’s Club, Mike Opichka – Eagle’s Club, Neal Christensen – Eagle’s Club, Darryl Barker – Knights of Columbus, Mike Caylor – St. Francis.

Agenda Items:

The new Eagle’s Club to the group Mike Opichka was introduced.

- 1) **Burger Prices:** Information was provided to clubs on the costs of some local providers for our burgers used during the week of the fair, contact person and distribution plan by the main provider was also discussed.
- 2) **Future Carnival Dates:** It was reaffirmed that this is a get to know year for Spectrum the new carnival vendor and the LCFA, but so far they are anticipating the fair will continue to be held in August from here on out. Everyone present noted that it is hoped the two have a good marriage will provide for many years, this will also allow us to get a firm date range for fairs into the future.
- 3) **Recycling:** At the request of Mike Caylor the city user group will have recycling on the agenda for their July meeting. Everyone present expressed great interest in having recycling available for the permanent stands for events on the grounds.
- 4) **Rodeo Wrap Up:** The Eagle’s Club provided an update on the Rodeo, everyone agreed we would like to work with the Rodeo to move a food vending area in back of the grandstand which could be potentially staffed by all five food permanent food vendors who pool the workers and profits, or by alternating combined groups. It is felt the layout seems to isolate the permanent stands, something that has plagued the permanent stands for the last 40 years when it comes to grandstand only events.
- 5) **Tractor Pull Update:** A discussion was held on plans for this year tractor pull.
- 6) **Bulk Potato Purchase:** Discussion was held on how the late fair date will work well for those using fresh cut potatoes this year. We have a huge variety of vendors to seek prices from now, bulk and group purchasing was agreed upon for exploration.
- 7) **Fair Board Rep Meeting:** The LCFB usually meets with the permanent stands in advance of the fair, Mike Caylor is hoping to network with Brad Becker at the city meeting on July 12th to clarify the need. The Eagle’s Club did report very positive results of a discussion with the LCFB over entertainment at this year’s fair.
- 8) **Bulk LP Fill Up:** In a way to cut down expenses the Optimist Club rep has provided preliminary info on a potential for a bulk fuel fill up from a local provider. This will be clarified at a future meeting.
- 9) **Permanent Stands Retirement:** A discussion took place regarding what was affirmed at the city meeting held on June 5th and provided to all clubs in the synopsis of that meeting which was previously emailed.

Meeting adjourned: 7:08 PM

Minutes by Mike Caylor – Chair

Attachment: Monthly Report - Food Vendor Rep. (3434 : Food Vendor Rep. Caylor)

Merrill Festival Grounds

July 12, 2018

Grandstand and Grounds:

General:

Placing an interstate facing billboard on City property is ongoing with a probable underwriter. The underwriting has been discussed at several levels inside of the company and continues to pass review by corporate departments.

New lighting is being installed. Creating height with new or altered poles would be helpful. Addition of lighting needs to continue to create a safe and user-friendly environment.

Additional electric hook-ups along the fence line and in the infield are a priority along with sewer hook-up or dump stations and water connections.

Installation of the new restrooms took place in time for the Tractor Pull and were greatly appreciated by the public.

Identification and prioritization of capital improvements for the grounds is an ongoing exercise and is conducted in accord with the TIF requirements and user group needs. Current projects to improve the appearance and function of existing buildings will be noticeable to the community and user groups.

Successful Festival Grounds facilities are generally described as:

1. Year-round facilities are multi-use
2. Indoor, fully climatized exhibition-style building
3. Entertainment venue customized for specific market demand in the form of a grandstand, race track, indoor arena, amphitheater, etc.
4. Defined and improved camping facilities
5. Dedicated livestock facilities
6. Up-to-date restrooms and patron amenities

The City of Merrill has moved past some of the County study recommendations but it is always prudent to review the comprehensive study so that future planning does not miss items. Additional categories could include: Perimeter Fence (with caution), reduction of Humane Society footprint, paving/asphalt, plantings, trees, electrical grid, winterized buildings, canopies, shade and rest areas, picnic tables, sewer and water hook-ups,

Tractor Pull:

NTPA/WTPA consultants made recommendations to assist Merrill to make the correct dirt preparations. Crews have opened the track and are using several methods for its preparation.

The new marketing plan seems to be successful. The event is reviewing its signage and graphics.

WTPA has confirmed a new 4x4 class. Future events may include garden tractors, semi-trucks, etc. and may consider adding a day.

Pricing is reduced to that of the year one event in concurrence with the sponsor and underwriter and should boost attendance.

The Tractor Pull is being re-structured as a non-stock corporation by River Valley Bank's law firm.

Rodeo:

Next year, porta toilets will not be required so the physical layout will be better for all.

Vending could help concessions. ATM is a good concession.

Extensive photos of the grounds lay-out were taken as well as drone photos. The layout was more efficient this year.

Upgraded infield electric panels are becoming a priority as well as possible access to sewer and dump station facilities.

New welcome signs could help at the entrance and at the entertainment tent.

County Fair:

August 15-19

Recommended that fencing inside the fairgrounds be reduced or eliminated. Check points for age can be maintained with a stamp or wristband given for daily ID. Encourage all beer stands to provide entertainment.

Location of the new restrooms may reduce carnival footprint. Some adjustment might be possible east of the restrooms to increase capacity. The layout is a priority for the fair following last summer's poor carnival.

Use Expo stage for contests and additional programs.

The committee in charge of the livestock auction (the fair is a terminal show) has done a superb job of lining up corporate and private buyers for the auction. It is one of the better auctions in the state in the county fair category. The work done by the committee is a model for the fair to

use in seeking additional support, sponsorship and possible angel underwriting. Such additional support will help the fair continue to be a “free fair”.

Bierman Expo Hall:

A Group has been contacted, visited the facility and has agreed to bring 2 gun shows per year to the Expo (September and March). Discussions continue as to content and layout.

We have been complimented by user groups for such clean facilities, for the building being well laid out and equipped. Nick does an excellent job. Rental rates are very user friendly and equally applied.

Reservations for weddings in summer of 2018 are increasing monthly. Diane is superb at talking with the potential users. She has excellent acumen for event business.

Jack Koshick, talent buyer for NRG Radio is interested in the Expo as a possible concert site as well as wrestling events. He has visited on-site and met with some of the city representatives and resources. We are exploring a joint-venture with another wrestling producer to reduce initial risk for the first event. An underwriter is being sought for \$1000.00 to help launch the event.

Cameo Roets, Marketing director for WIFC, WDEZ, WSAU, WOZZ AND Fox has visited and is considering producing radio station entertainment concerts at the expo.