

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

October 3, 2018

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, October 3, 2018 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Kyle Gulke, Mike Willman, Jean Ravn, Joan Tabor and Kate Baker

Members Excused Absent: Brian Artac, Dave Sukow

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Mayor Woellner, Tom Fox, Heather O'Neil, Abigail Hageneister MP3, Savannan Higgings MP3, Susan Williams, Paul Russell, Jeremy Radtloff, Deborah Tidwell

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Baker to approve the minutes from the September meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Baker, seconded by Tabor, to approve the claims from September 2018

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Heather O'Neil, W6725 Edward Drive, Merrill, WI. Heather stated that she is the biggest advocate for the skate park and has been researching the project for the past 3 years. O'Neil believes that the MARC would be the best location for the skate park considering that it is already shovel ready and when you have large events there is ample room for parking. O'Neil stated that her only goal is to build the best skate park for this community. O'Neil stated that she thought Streeter Square would not be the best option due to room restrictions. There would be no room to expand the park and also when you have skating events there would be no room for parking. The other problem is that the neighbors don't want it in their neighborhood.

Sue Williams, 201 N. Mill Street, Merrill, WI. Sue stated that her feeling on the skate park have not changed since the last meeting. She does not want the skate park at Streeter Square and feels the MARC would be a better location.

Tim Meeham, Council Member, email read by Wendorf. Meeham requested that the Park and Recreation Department should consider Stange Park for the new skate park location. It could go where the basketball courts are being built and the basketball courts could go somewhere else.

Paul Russell, 2404 Cotter Court, Merrill, WI. Russell can't believe that the park has not been relocated yet due to safety purposes for the kids. Russell would like to see the skate park at any location but where it is now. If it goes out to the MARC Russell believes that the kids would find a way there, they do for the Aquatic Center and also for softball and soccer. Russell stated that he supports the skate park at the MARC.

The next item on the agenda was to discuss Skate Park and potential action. Wendorf stated that someone from the community has contacted the commission members stating that she has some concerns as to where the skate park is going. Wendorf also received a request from Kate Baker for the skate park location to be put back on the agenda. Baker stated that she thought that there should be a public hearing concerning the location of the skate park. Baker feels that not everyone had a chance to share their concerns about the location of the skate park and would like to see a public hearing take place.

***Motion by Baker, seconded by Tabor to hold a public hearing on potential sites for Skate Park.

Gulke stated that in his opinion everyone had a chance to speak already and it would be nice to start on the next phase of the skate park. Tabor questioned what would need to be done for a public hearing. Wendorf stated that the meeting has to be held at 6:00 p.m. in the evening and has to be advertised at least 2 weeks in advance. Willman stated that he felt everyone has had more than one opportunity to speak at a meeting and doesn't feel that doing a public hearing is going to make a difference. Mayor Woellner stated that he was getting the impression that the skaters did not really care where the Skate Park went; they would just like to see one done.

Willman had Smith reread the motion by Baker in regards to having a public hearing on potential sites for Skate Park.

***Motion denied – Baker: yes, Gulke: abstains vote: Tabor, Ravn & Willman: no.

The next item on the agenda is monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Wendorf stated that as of October 1st all parks have been closed and he is happy that the guys will be starting on other projects. Wendorf stated that the Stange Park project is coming along nice and almost completed. Lights at Athletic will be going in shortly.

***Motion by Ravn, seconded by Tabor to approve the monthly board reports given by Wendorf.

***Carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 14, 2018 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall. Wendorf requested the second Wednesday in November verses the first.

Public comment: Heather O'Neil stated that the distance between the old Skate Park and the MARC is only 1.6 miles and feels that the kids would be able to get there. Mayor Woellner stated that as he heard at one meeting, "Let's make America Skate again."

***Motion by Tabor, seconded by Baker to adjourn at 5:15 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary