

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

August 5, 2020

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, August 5, 2020 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Members Present: Dan Novitch, Kyle Gulke, Jean Ravn, Joan Tabor, Brian Artac, Amanda Groth and John Van Lieshout.

Members Excused Absent:

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: City Administrator Dave Johnson, Mark Weix and MP3

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Ravn to approve the minutes from the July meeting.

***Carried unanimously.

***Motion by Van Lieshout, seconded by Groth, to approve the claims from July.

***Carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

The next item on the agenda was continued discussion on 2021 Capital Budget requests. Wendorf stated that since the last meeting he spoke with his department workers, Jim Yates and Joe Weckwerth and they both stated that in addition to the items listed they would also like to ask for funding for the following projects:

1. City Forest main road & parking lot reconstruct
2. Replace Ott's Dock and repair landing
3. Replace water supply line to Kitchenette restrooms
4. Concrete aprons around park shelters.

Wendorf stated that he would also like to see the Solar panel installation at the Smith Center, stating that it would be nice to see it start paying for itself. Wendorf stated that he realizes we will not receive all of the items listed but would like to see at least half the items. Ravn stated that she would like to see the curling center back on the list as a future item. Gulke stated it would be nice if the council just gave the departments a set amount of money and they could spend as they see fit instead of the council deciding what each department should have. Novitch stated that he would like to see the council follow the direction of the Park and Recreation Commission instead of the council making the decision on what is needed most in the department. Novitch stated that the commission spends a lot of time on capital planning and would like the council to consider as many projects as possible. This item will remain on the agenda.

The next item on the agenda was COVID-19 discussion. Wendorf stated that the Park and Recreation Department has been impacted very hard from everything that is going on but continue to do the best possible job we can. Wendorf stated that he has received updated recommendations from the LCHD and it is suggested that all youth sports be postponed, no festivals, large gatherings or parades. Wendorf stated that he believes that flag football will be impossible to keep kids safe so his recommendation is not to have it this year. Wendorf also stated that he believes that it will be impossible to run the Labor Day Parade this year. People

would not be able to safely distance themselves on floats and there could not be any handouts and no throwing candy. Wendorf also stated that it would be impossible to make sure everyone watching the parade could socially distance themselves. Wendorf also stated that it will be impossible for us to have the Colorama bike ride this year. A lot of the riders are from out of town and we would not be able to serve them any meal after the ride. We also have over 70 riders every year which would go against the no crowds of 50 or more. Barleyfest will also be cancelled this year. Wendorf stated that in regards to the ice this year at the Smith Center, we will be putting ice in. There will be some changes on how things will operate. There will be no locker room usage, kids will have to come dressed ready to play, and bleachers will have an X on them to where people will be able to sit. Wendorf also stated that if recommendations change from the LCHD and it's not going to be worth our time, there is a possibility of the ice not going in. This item will remain on the agenda. Groth and Van Lieshout both suggested following LCHD guidelines/recommendations to help make decisions.

The next item on the agenda was to review/approve potential resolution of support to apply for 2021 WDNR Urban Forestry Grant. Wendorf stated that for approval of the grant there needs to be a resolution of support. Fifty percent of funds are matched. Wendorf said he would like to use funding for more tree plantings and to review and possibly update forestry ordinances.

***Motion by Van Lieshout, seconded by Tabor to approve potential resolution of support to apply for 2021 WDNR Urban Forestry Grant.

***Carried unanimously.

Wendorf stated that this agenda item will be sent to City Council for approval.

The next item on the agenda was monthly reports. Wendorf asked if anyone had any questions. Wendorf stated that the department is working with only 3 seasonal staff this year. Wendorf stated that hopefully soon the River Rat will be back in place by the Library. Wendorf thanked Parks and Recreation staff for coming together and helping wherever needed to get things done.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 4:15 p.m. at the Merrill City Hall.

Public Comment:

***Motion by Artac, seconded by Van Lieshout to adjourn at 5:15 p.m.

***Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith
Recording Secretary