

Meeting Minutes
Town of Highland Tree Board
March 17, 2022

1. Time and Place of Meeting: President Colias called a Zoom Meeting to order at 7:15 PM delayed 15 minutes awaiting a host for the meeting.
2. Roll Call:
Present: Board Members James Colias, Ron Jackowski, Joan Roback, Laura Steyer, Richard Underkofler and Bernie Zeman. Trever Kinley, Highland Parks Director; Alicias Fortiz and Anaiyah Fonseca, Highland High School Sustainability Club.
Absent: Board Member Elizabeth Herrejon; other invited employees of the Town and agencies.
3. General substance of matters proposed, discussed, or decided - record of all votes taken by individual members if there is a roll call:
 - **Motion**: Jackowski moved to approve minutes of the last meeting held February 17, 2022; seconded by Colias and approved by unanimous consent of the members present.
4. Old Business:
 - a. Successor Board Members: At the Town Council meeting held March 14th, Bernie Zemen was appointed to the balance of the January 2024 term of Sarah Krick; Laura Steyer was appointed to succeed Michael Burns. Laura's term expires January 2025.
 - b. Tree Signs: Ron Jackowski emailed a link [<https://www.plantsmap.com/highland-trees>] and presented representative photos of local trees.
"Some of its features vs. physical signs alone:
 - Seasonal appeal of a plant can be highlighted in photos of spring bloom, fall color, etc.
 - They can be geolocated nearly anywhere - the map with green dots allows you to explore the town without leaving home.
 - Collections and subcollections can group plants e.g., by a park or garden.
 - They can be combined with signs if there was an interest, but this is nice for where signs are impractical."This topic will be considered again at our next meeting awaiting a cost estimate for the plants map application. A photo was attached to the agenda sent by Drew Hart titled "Arbor Day Tree Team". It showed placard type sign themes "Trees need Advocates", "Trees Need Water", "Trees Need Space", etc. Underkofler will attempt to collect some for our Arbor Day Celebration.
 - c. Board Introduction Letters: Jim Colias was asked to proceed with letters to introduce our group to various service organizations, vendors and contractors in town to share why we exist, our successes, give some insight into our future plans and ask for their help in promoting us through the community. Jim will forward a letter template to Joan Roback, who volunteered to print and mail the letters. Another attachment was a list of proposed recipients of the letter; one group being those for which their letter will include mention of financial support, the other group will receive an introductory letter, part of our continuing effort to make the community aware of our work. Jim asked for additions, directions or comments regarding the list. Underkofler will secure envelopes from Town Hall. Bernie Zemen was confident some funding could be secured in the Town Council's public relations budget for reimbursements for the mailings and other Tree Board operating expenses.

5. New Business:

- a. CommuniTree Grant: Highland's application was submitted March 9; a copy was attached to the agenda. Receipt was acknowledged March 14. "We anticipate notifying applicants of their tree awards and species during the week of March 28. Please mark your calendar for April 14. If you are awarded trees, they will be distributed on that date after the Tree Planting and Maintenance Workshop."
 - b. 2022 Arbor Day: Tentative plans are underway for Highland's 2022 Arbor Day Celebration with the students and staff of Our Lady of Grace School. The event will begin at 10 am on Friday, April 29, 2022. We will stage the event and plant a tree at Main Square Park. The tentative program will consist of an opening ceremony, a reading and delivery of the proclamation by the Town Council President, remarks by Senator Michael Griffin, Representative Mike Andrade, an arborist or tree board member about how to plant and care for new trees, the planting of a tree and distribution of seedlings to the students for planting at their homes. Elizabeth Herrejon, a member of the Highland High School Sustainability Club and our newest tree board member, intends to recruit participation by high school students. Club Sponsor Heather Oaks sent an email that reported students who participate will become eligible for chevrons for their letter jackets. Underkofler will ask the American Legion to provide an opening ceremony. He will ask Trever Kinley to provide a PA system. He will ask NIPSCO to provide an arborist presentation, donate a tree and seedlings.
6. Discussion Topics: Comments from Board Members, the Public and/or Visitors: This item of business is confined to announcements of intention to bring a future action, or requests for the preparation of administrative work product for future consideration. In no instance may a matter for final action be taken up under this item of business.
- a. Jackowski said he has some trees growing in his backyard that are ready for donation and transplanting. He asked Underkofler to inquire if Public Works has a street project scheduled this year where streetscape is occurring or needed.
 - b. Jackowski asked for an update on locations where homeowners have requested CommuniTree grant plantings. He was reminded tree board members will be responsible for watering trees planted in medians if Street Department crews haven't done it.
 - c. Colias reported our Facebook site is getting more "likes" and "shares".
7. Next Meeting: April 21, 2022.
8. Adjournment
- **Motion:** Zemen moved to adjourn at 8:13 PM; seconded by Roback and approved by unanimous consent of the members present.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Underkofler, Secretary