

**Meeting Minutes
Town of Highland Tree Board
April 21, 2022**

1. Time and Place of Meeting: President Colias called the monthly meeting of the Town of Highland Tree Board at 7:00 PM, April 21, 2022 at Town Hall and as a Zoom Meeting.
2. Roll Call:
Present: Board Members James Colias, Elizabeth Herrejon, Ron Jackowski, Joan Roback, Laura Steyer, Richard Underkofler and Bernie Zemen. Carlos Aburto, Park Board. Connie Wachala and Mary Hackett, Highland Neighbors for Sustainability, Mary Hackett participated via Zoom.
Absent: Other invited employees of the Town and agencies.
3. Presentation: Connie Wachala and Mary Hackett gave information about “Highland Neighbors for Sustainability,” an environmental advocacy group organized about two years ago who want our Town and Region to have a sustainable future. The group’s representatives convinced region town councils to host interns from the IU Environmental Resilience Institute to conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory in 2021. In 2022, interns are working on a regional climate action plan to suggest ways of lowering emissions. The group has been helping to maintain rain gardens at the downtown parking lot and Main Square Park. On April 23, the group sponsored an event at Hessville Park to celebrate Earth Month. The group desires to collaborate with the Tree Board and the High School Sustainability Club on volunteer recruitment for tree planting and pruning workshops and projects of mutual interest.
4. General substance of matters proposed, discussed, or decided - record of all votes taken by individual members if there is a roll call:
 - **Motion**: Zemen moved to approve minutes of the last meeting held March 17, 2022; seconded by Roback and approved by unanimous consent.
5. Old Business:
 - a. Student Conservation Association (SCA) Plantings: Funding for SCA plantings is provided from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Chi-Cal Rivers Fund; its grant funding has been approved again for 2022. The SCA has been asked to replace trees this Spring for SCA 2020 plantings that died at Merkley School and White Oak Park. We’ve been asked to suggest Fall 2022 planting locations.
 - b. CommuniTree Spring 2022 Plantings: Funding for the CommuniTree Grant Program is made possible through a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant awarded to the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission by the USDA Forest Service. This table identifies trees collected 4/14/2022.

Tree	Species	Number
Hornbeam, American (Blue Beech)	<i>Carpinus caroliniana</i>	5
Yellowwood	<i>Cladrastis lutea</i>	3
Tulip	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	8
Tupelo (Black Gum)	<i>Nyssa sylvatica</i>	1
Hop Hornbeam	<i>Ostrya virginiana</i>	3
Oak, Chinquapin	<i>Quercus muehlenbergii</i>	5
Elm, American	<i>Ulmus americana</i>	5
	Total	30

Homeowners were emailed the list of tree’s received and asked to pick desired species. Jackowski and Underkofler will meet with Public Works Operations Director Tim Gembala to help formulate a worksheet to assist with assigning species to homeowner parkway locations.

- c. Tree Signs: Board members were asked to review the recommended application at this link [<https://www.plantsmap.com/highland-trees>] together with a \$49 annual cost estimate provided by Jackowski. Colias reported trees planted along the Wicker Park walking trails may appear on approval of the Park Superintendent. Underkofler offered to fund the expense for the first year.
 - **Motion**: Underkofler moved to approve the plants map application; seconded by Herrejon and approved by unanimous consent.
 - d. Board Introduction/Solicitation Letters: Colias distributed a copy of a letter mailed to community service clubs, businesses and churches together with an invitation to our Arbor Day Event. He said Matt's Lawncare & Landscaping funded the expense. Bernie Zemen reported he was able to secure some funding in the Town Council's budget for reimbursements for the mailings and other Tree Board operating expenses.
 - e. 2022 Arbor Day Event: The Town of Highland is hosting its 2022 Arbor Day Celebration with the students and staff of Our Lady of Grace School. The event will begin across from the school in Main Square Park at 10 am on Friday, April 29, 2022. The program will consist of an opening ceremony by the students, a reading and delivery of an Arbor Day Proclamation by Council President Bernie Zemen. There will be remarks by State Senator Michael Griffin and State Representative Mike Andrade, who each will be providing saplings for the students from their state nursery legislative allocation. NIPSCO will donate a 1.5 caliper Norway Spruce tree for planting in the park. Andrea Nichols, NIPSCO Arborist & Forestry Supervisor, will provide remarks about how to plant and care for a new tree.
6. New Business:
- a. Energy Saving Trees: NIPSCO partners with the Arbor Day Foundation to distribute trees to homeowners within their service area communities for planting strategically in yards. A homeowner may go to energysavingtrees.arborday.org; enter his/her address and discover available species. Red Oak, Serviceberry, Sugar Maple and Tulip trees are presently available for Spring 2022 plantings. They are 1 gallon; 1-3 ft., potted mailings. Notice has been posted on our Facebook site.
 - b. Streetscape Trees: At last month's meeting Jackowski said he has some trees growing in his backyard that are ready for donation and transplanting. Public Works was asked if street projects scheduled for this year where streetscape is needed. Tim Gembala replied, "We really do not need any more trees." Elizabeth Herrejon asked for a replacement tree at her house in Sandalwood Subdivision.
 - c. SCA Fall 2022 Tree Planting Locations: No suggestions offered.
7. 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.
8. Next Meeting: May 19, 2022.
9. Adjournment
- **Motion**: Zemen moved to adjourn at 8:30 PM; seconded by Roback and approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Underkofler, Secretary