

The monthly meeting of the Town of Highland Tree Board will begin at 7:00 PM, Thursday, October 17, 2024 at Town Hall in an upstairs meeting room. No Zoom meeting this month.

Richard Underkofler Secretary

**Highland Tree Board Agenda for Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 17, 2024 – 7 PM**

Roll Call:

Board Members: Mary Ann Brunt, Jim Colias, Ron Jackowski, John (JT) Mackey, Blane Roberts, Arleen Sandrick, Richard Underkofler. Alex Robertson is the Town Council's Tree Board Liaison. webupdates@theideafactory.us.com c/o Theresa Badovich & Robin Carlascio.

Invited Town Staff: Philip Scheeringa, Council President; Mark Herak, Clerk/Treasurer; Mark Knesek, Public Works Director; Tim Gembala, Public Works Operations Director; Alex Brown, Superintendent, Parks & Recreation Department; Trever Kinley, Parks Director; Maria Becerra, Redevelopment Director.

Others: Doug Van Ramshorst, Highland Community Foundation; Drew Hart, USDA, Forest Service; Jennifer Birchfield, NIRPC; Rebecca Koetz, Lake County Purdue Extension Educator; Connie Wachala & Cathy Perrin, Highland Neighbors for Sustainability; Mélina Blanc, Delta Institute; Phil Graf, Great Lakes Urban Forest Management; Nina Brown & Monica Kurz, Teacher/Co-Sponsors Highland High School Sustainability Club; Joe Moore <joe@ecsontime.com>, Flint Aren aren.flint@davey.com; drepay@littlcalumetriverbasin.org; mikerepay@gmail.com

Minutes: A motion is requested to approve minutes of the regular meeting held September 19, 2024 and a special meeting held September 26, 2024. Copies are distributed with this agenda.

Old Business:

- a. **Meeting Attendance:** Chair Jim Colias may be absent for this meeting attending a trade show.
- b. **Seedling Donation:** The Little Calumet River Watershed Seedling Planting Project has been delayed until the Board's November 21 meeting pending a decision whether the Little Calumet River Basin Commission will approve a grant for the Town to retain a contractor to plant and water them during drought conditions. The application is awaiting a species planting plan from Davey Resource Group. Secretary Underkofler intends to propose Joe Moore d/b/a Erosion Construction Services as the contractor for the project.
- c. **NW Indiana Tree Planting Consortium Meeting:** Attached are Adobe slides from the October meeting of the NW Indiana Tree Planting Consortium, which includes links to upcoming events and funding opportunities.
- d. **Partners in Community Forestry Conference:** This year's Arbor Day Foundation Conference will be held at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago November 20-21, 2024. Notice and the agenda was forwarded to Board Members 8/13/24.

New Business: No topics identified.

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. **Meet with Merrillville and Valparaiso Forestry Staff:** Ron Jackowski reported he will meet with Merrillville and Valparaiso Arborists to secure answers to questions he identified about their community forestry operations.
- b. **Action Plan:** The Board may review, change and update its 2024 Action Plan.
 1. Monthly idea sharing of new ideas to keep the Board moving forward - All Board Members.
 2. Become a member of the Indiana Arborist Association and participate in the IAA Annual Conference. Completed 1/23/24 by Jackowski and Underkofler.
 3. Seek Town Council appointments to expiring Board Member terms. Completed 3/11/24.
 4. Cancel Board Meetings in July and December – Decided 4-18-2024.
 5. Participate in Park Pride Day – Completed 4/20/24.
 6. Organize an annual Arbor Day Observance – Assigned to Underkofler; completed 4/26/24.
 7. Post a Tree of the Month and Tree Care Tips on the Board's Facebook Site - Assigned to Colias.
 8. Secure 1-2 speakers per year for educational sessions on pertinent topics - Assigned to Colias. A first session about Cicada Information occurred 5/21/24.
 9. Attend Chamber of Commerce lunch meetings to establish community partnerships and sponsorships. Assigned to Sandrick.
 10. Review whether the Approved / Unapproved Species List needs an update. Assigned to Jackowski.
 11. Participate in the Fourth of July Parade with Highland Neighbors for Sustainability. Completed.
 12. Secure utility clearance and transplant Jackowski nursery trees. Assigned to Jackowski. Fall 2024 Requests received: Bernie Zemen, 2736 43rd Street.
 13. Recruit new Board Members to succeed Blane Roberts and Richard Underkofler.
 14. Renew application for 2024 Tree City USA recognition before December 31. Assigned to Underkofler.
 15. Establish a list of 2024 accomplishments/key facts and publish an Annual Report for a media release to the Town Council, Gazebo Express, NWI Times and WJOB. Assigned to Underkofler.

Next Meeting: November 21, 2024

Adjournment