

**Highland Tree Board
Agenda for Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 15, 2025 – 7 PM
Upstairs at Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road**

Roll Call:

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

Invited Town Staff: George Georgeff, 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: Richard Underkofler, 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; Joe Moore, Erosion Construction Services; Dan Repay, Little Calumet River Basin Commission; Mike Repay, Lake County Commissioner;

Minutes: A motion is requested to approve the minutes of a meeting held April 17, 2025. A copy is distributed with this agenda.

Old Business:

- a. **Tree Inventory:** Phil Graf on behalf of Great Lakes Urban Forestry to provide update on tree inventory. At the last meeting, the team was working to inventory trees at parks, schools, town real estate, waterways, and perform quality control measures.
- b. **Duluth & Parrish Street Sanitary District Tree Planting:** Phil Graf provided a tree evaluation and arborist report providing an assessment of the planting along Duluth Street following an infrastructure rebuild project. The assessment finds the work had issues with design and planting. Phil recommends relocating 30-40 of the trees before they begin to grow.
- c. **Little Calumet River South Watershed Seedling Project:** On April 24 and 25, over 200 hundred seedlings were planted. Thank you to Tree Board Members, Delta Institute, Highland Neighbors for Sustainability, Joe Moore and ECS for making this a reality.
- d. **Highland Twilight Parade – July 3rd:** Last year the Highland Tree Board was represented on the Highland Neighbors for Sustainability float. Call for volunteers to participate in the 2025 Highland Twilight Parade on July 3rd.
- e. **Review Approved/Unapproved Tree Species.** Scott Polster, Phil Graf and Ron Jackowski are working together to make the document more "user friendly."
- f. **Jackowski Nursery Planting.** Ron Jackowski will select a date in May and secure 811 utility locates to transplant trees to homeowner yards of Bernie Zemen, 2736 43rd Street and Chuck Haber, 8417 Cottage Grove Avenue.
- g. **NWI Urban Waters Federal Partnership.** Arleen Sandrick planned to join the session scheduled for April 24, 2025 via Zoom from 9:30 – 11:30 AM.

New Business:

- a. 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. Action Plan: The Board may adopt a 2025 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 1/21/25 by Jackowski and Roberts.
 3. Seek Town Council appointments to expiring Board Member terms. **Completed 2-24-2025**
 4. Seek Board Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary appointments. **Completed 2-24-2025**
 5. Cancel Board Meetings in July and December.
 6. Participate in Park Pride Day. **Assigned to Mary Ann Brunt 4-26-2025.**
 7. Board member distribution of CommuniTree Grant Trees to homeowners at the Public Works Yard. Scheduled Saturday, April 19th from 9 to 11 AM. **Completed Saturday, 4-19-25.**
 8. Organize an annual Arbor Day Observance – Scheduled week of April 20 to April 25. **Completed 4-25-25.**
 9. Post a Tree of the Month and Tree Care Tips on the Board's Facebook Site - Assigned to Colias.
 10. Secure 1-2 speakers per year for educational sessions on pertinent topics - Assigned to Colias.
 11. Attend Chamber of Commerce and NWI Urban Waters Partnership Meetings to establish community partnerships and sponsorships. Assigned to Sandrick.
 12. Review whether the Approved / Unapproved Species List needs an update. Assigned to Jackowski. **Assigned to Phil Graf, Polster and Jackowski 4-14-25.**
 13. Secure utility clearance and transplant Jackowski nursery trees. Scheduled Spring 2025. Requests received: Bernie Zemen, 2736 43rd Street and Chuck Haber, 8417 Cottage Grove Avenue.
 14. Recruit new Board Members for terms expiring in January 2026.
 15. Renew application for 2025 Tree City USA recognition before December 31. **Assigned to Secretary.**
 16. Establish a list of 2025 accomplishments/key facts and publish an Annual Report for a media release to the Town Council, Gazebo Express, NWI Times and WJOB. **Assigned to Secretary.**

Next Meeting: Thursday June 19, 2025.

Adjournment