MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY TREE BOARD
FEBRUARY 6, 2019

The Michigan City Tree Board met in a regular meeting in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall Building, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, Indiana, on Wednesday, February 6, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting.

CALL TO ORDER
President Mick Wulff called the meeting to order at approximately 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL
Members present: Connie Anderson, Barbara Ginther, William Ginther, Laura Henderson, Laura Kalk, Mick Wulff

Members absent:
Johnny Stimley

Staff present:
City Forester Adam Garza, Planning Department Administrative Assistant Debbie Wilson

Staff absent:
None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The chair entertained a motion for approval of the January 9, 2019 minutes.

Motion by Mrs. Ginther – seconded by Ms. Henderson approving the minutes of January 9, 2019 as submitted. Voice vote was as follows: (Ayes) Connie Anderson, Barbara Ginther, William Ginther, Laura Henderson, Laura Kalk, Mick Wulff – 6; (Nays) None – 0; (Absent) Johnny Stimley – 1. With a vote of 6 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 absent, the MOTION CARRIED.

SECRETARY/TREASURER’S REPORT
The chair entertained a motion for approval of the financial report ended 01/31/19.

Motion by Mrs. Ginther – seconded by Mr. Ginther approving the financial report ended 01/31/19 as submitted. Voice vote was as follows: (Ayes) Connie Anderson, Barbara Ginther, William Ginther, Laura Henderson, Laura Kalk, Mick Wulff – 6; (Nays) None – 0; (Absent) Johnny Stimley – 1. With a vote of 6 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 absent, the MOTION CARRIED.
CLAIMS
The chair entertained a motion for approval of the claims for February.

Motion by Mr. Ginther – seconded by Mrs. Ginther approving the claims for February as submitted. Voice vote was as follows: (Ayes) Connie Anderson, Barbara Ginther, William Ginther, Laura Henderson, Laura Kalk, Mick Wulff – 6; (Nays) None – 0; (Absent) Johnny Stimley – 1. With a vote of 6 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 absent, the MOTION CARRIED.

COMMUNICATIONS
Ms. Wilson announced that the City Council approved the Shoreline Regulation amendments. She will forward a copy of the ordinance to Board members once it is signed.

Mr. Garza recalled that the revision was to be for a protected tree being any hardwood tree with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 6” or more, but what the Council agreed on was a DBH of 8” or more.

Mr. Wulff said he personally felt it was a low blow by the City Council making it 8” since Tree Board representatives showed up at their workshops with proof and the fact that the Board took interest in it. He expressed his displeasure to the organization that did the edits.

Mr. Garza reminded Mr. Wulff that the City previously had nothing, so he felt 8” was great and the number he was hoping to obtain; although anything lower is better and he would have preferred lower. He felt 8” is the happy middle ground even though no one is really happy about it.

Mr. Wulff commented that the Council asked for the Board’s professional opinion, but then they bypassed their opinion and did their own thing. He felt it was a slap in the face.

Mr. Garza thanked Tree Board members for their input and support, stating that he did not think he could have gotten the number below 10” with just him talking to the Council; he could not have gotten the 8” without the backing and support of Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach
(Gardening/Landscaping)
Ms. Kalk stated that it is a good time for everyone to get their ducks in a row for their gardens and to consider tree trimming because it is still a great time to get trees trimmed (specifically oak trees). She pointed out that the time span for trimming is
getting shorter because of the weather. She reminded everyone to get professional insured people to do the work.

(Arbor Day)
Ms. Kalk stated that NIPSCO contacted her about working with the Tree Board again this year for Arbor Day. She said this year they have a different program setup involving larger trees and they wanted to know if the Tree Board would pair up with them on the program. People would sign up on line through NIPSCO’s website to apply for the trees. These would be 5-7 gallon trees. All the trees would be at the site for pick up by the people that day. She said if the Board does not want to participate in the program, NIPSCO will have pick up at their site. If the Board wants to participate, she told NIPSCO the trees could be delivered to Beachside Gardens and their crew could bring them over to the Farmer’s Market on that day.

Ms. Kalk said she also told NIPSCO how important the seedlings are for the Board to give away as well. They indicated that they would try to help the Board obtain them, but she stated that the Board might have to go their own direction in getting those.

Ms. Henderson asked how the program would be publicized.

Ms. Kalk stated that the Board would put it in the newspaper, just as they would with the seedling giveaway; NIPSCO would set up the site.

Board members expressed their concern about having the manpower available to put the trees into people’s vehicles and they were also concerned about what would happen if the trees were not picked up. They felt the large trees would be more of a laborious situation, but after lengthy discussion it was felt that they should try to participate in the program this year to see how it goes. It was suggested to possibly use Boy Scouts for loading the trees into vehicles or publicize that the trees must be self-loaded when picked up.

Ms. Kalk offered Beachside Gardens as a holding site for pick up of leftover trees; although she felt there should be a two-day holding limit, and after the two days the trees would be donated to the schools.

Ms. Kalk said she would get more information from NIPSCO and pass it onto the Board via email. She said a firm decision would need to be made within the next two weeks.

There was also discussion about source ordering for the bare root seedlings. Mr. Wulff asked that Mr. Garza reach out to the State Nursery to get them ordered. Ms. Kalk offered to help him with species selection based on past requests from the public.
City Park Trees
Mr. Garza reported that he received a lot of calls over the past couple days about limbs falling. He continues with inspections, mostly maples with hollows and limbs cracking off.

Mr. Wulff stated that the recent cold snap probably contributed to a lot of limbs falling.

City Street Trees
Mr. Garza stated that he was contacted by William Woodruff who heard the city is lacking tree canopy cover. Mr. Woodruff owns a large nursery on Highway 2, but he is downsizing his current 100+ acres of trees. A portion of his property was purchased to be used as a field to grow corn and beans, so he is tilling up the trees. Mr. Woodruff told Mr. Garza that he could take the trees if the City wants them – all varieties and sizes. Mr. Woodruff also offered the use of his equipment to get the trees out. Mr. Garza said he is currently getting an agreement in writing.

Mr. Wulff asked if the trees would be balled in burlap or if baskets would be used. He said burlap would be the inexpensive way to go but the baskets would keep the whole tree together for the longest amount of time. He said purchasing the baskets would be the biggest expense for the City since the trees are being donated.

Mr. Garza said all the logistics still need to be worked out, including a location for storing the trees until they are planted throughout the city.

Mr. Wulff commented that the $50,000 appropriation just approved for tree purchasing and maintenance could be used to buy the burlap/baskets. Mr. Garza agreed.

In another matter, Ms. Henderson asked the status of the NIPSCO program where they are trimming trees city-wide.

Mr. Garza said they are continuing their project to trim trees away from their power lines.

Ms. Henderson asked the status of their 2 for 1 program.

Mr. Garza said he has not heard any more about it lately, but he would reach out to them again to get an update.

Ms. Henderson also asked about the status of the tree removal project along Grand Beach Road which was contracted out to Loggins Tree Service.

Mr. Wulff stated that yesterday was the first day he saw them working since it was discussed at the last Tree Board meeting. He expressed his frustration with their work as well as the lack of work being done out there.
Mr. Garza said he would go out to the site to check on the status of the work.

**Grant Application and Maintenance**
Mr. Garza reported that he has not heard back on a lot of the grants he applied for; March is normally when communities are informed of awards. He has not heard anything on the government ones he applied for.

**Purchasing and Tree Planting**
(No further report from what was discussed earlier in the meeting)

**Planning Department**
(Plan Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Redevelopment Commission minutes are provided to the Tree Board via email from the Planning Department to keep Board members informed of upcoming projects)

**Urban Forest Plan Maintenance**
Mr. Garza reported that he is working with the City Planner on the matching grant for the tree inventory. The work is expected to begin this spring.

**Tree City Designation Maintenance**
It was noted that notice of award normally happens around Arbor Day.

**Goals**
(No report)

**OLD BUSINESS**
**Workman's comp for insurance**
Mr. Wulf reported that he has not yet heard back from the City Attorney. He commented that it is noted on the Arborist License list which contractors have workman's comp. Mr. Wulf pointed out that the general liability insurance is just for the owner/business, not for their workers.

(Application for planting in tree lawn)
Ms. Kalk recalled at the last meeting she mentioned that there is language in the Tree Ordinance indicating permits are needed along with fees for tree planting/removal, but the ordinance that is on line does not match that information. She said communication needs to continue with that and a decision made as to which ordinance details will be followed and if permits and fees are needed so that it is worded appropriately to be consistent with one another. Ms. Kalk said they are getting close to completing it and they should have that information by the next meeting.

(Purchasing and planting appropriation for 2019)
It was reported that the $50,000 appropriation for tree planting/maintenance was approved by the City Council.
NEW BUSINESS
(None)

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
(None)

PUBLIC COMMENTS
(None)

NEXT MEETING DATE
President Wulff announced that the next regular meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT
The chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Henderson – seconded by Mr. Ginther and unanimously approved.

The chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Barbara Ginther, Secretary