MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY TREE BOARD
MARCH 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, March 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 6:00 p.m.

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

Members absent:
Laura Kalk

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 February 6, 2019 minutes.

Motion by Ms. Henderson – seconded by Mr. Ginther approving the minutes of February 6, 2019 as submitted. Voice vote was as follows: (Ayes) Connie Anderson, Barbara Ginther, William Ginther, Laura Henderson, Johnny Stimley, Mick Wulff – 6; (Nays) None – 0; (Absent) Laura Kalk – 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 reports ended 01/31/19 revised and 02/28/19.

Motion by Mrs. Ginther – seconded by Mr. Ginther approving the financial reports ended 01/31/19 revised and 02/28/19 as submitted. Voice vote was as follows: (Ayes) Connie Anderson, Barbara Ginther, William Ginther, Laura Henderson,
Johnny Stimley, Mick Wulff – 6; (Nays) None – 0; (Absent) Laura Kalk – 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 March.

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

COMMUNICATIONS
(No communications)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach
(Gardening/Landscaping)
Mr. Wulff commented that it is getting near the end of winter, and as things warm up he suggests getting ideas of what you want to plant this spring and recommends having pruning done before things begin to sprout.

(Arbor Day)
Mr. Wulff pointed out that the Arbor Day event is tentatively planned for the first weekend in May at the Farmer’s Market at 8th/Washington Streets. In Ms. Kalks’ absence, Mr. Wulff read an email from her stating that she spoke to Andrea from NIPSCO who indicated they would be giving away 75 3-5-gallon trees, as they would be much smaller and more manageable than the originally planned 5-7-gallon trees. Ms. Kalk told Andrea that NIPSCO could deliver the trees to Beachside Gardens and then her crew could deliver them to the Farmer’s Market for pickup by the residents. She suggested getting a space of three tables at the Farmer’s Market so there is enough room for NIPSCO’s trees as well as the Tree Board having their own space for their setup and seedling giveaway. Andrea also indicated NIPSCO could provide the Tree Board with 100 seedlings; probably white pine.

Mr. Wulff asked Mr. Garza the status of getting seedlings for the City.

Mr. Garza said State Representative Pat Boy said she could get seedlings.

Ms. Henderson clarified that Mrs. Boy can get 100 seedlings but she would be sharing those with Chesterton as well.
Mr. Garza said he contacted the previous forester who indicated she got seedlings from NIPSCO.

Board members mentioned that in previous years they got hundreds of seedlings of different varieties from the State Nursery.

Mr. Garza stated that he did reach out to the State, but they referred him to other sources, one of which indicated they would provide 50 1-1 ½" caliper trees; he said no one has pushed him in the direction of providing bare root trees. He suggested that maybe the Board could purchase them.

Mr. Wulff stated that he would check his resources to see what he could find out about getting seedlings.

Ms. Henderson asked about reserving space at the Farmer’s Market.

Mr. Garza said he did not have a point of contact.

Mr. Stimley stated that Abigale Thayer with the City could help with getting space reserved.

Ms. Henderson asked who would be putting the notice in the newspaper.

Mr. Garza stated that NIPSCO will be doing the website and they will send him the link once it is finalized. He was not sure about the notice in the newspaper.

**City Park Trees**

Mr. Garza reported that the City is in the process of constructing a west parking lot in Washington Park. The contractor reached out to him for a species list of dune friendly acceptable plantings. He suggests oak and something faster growing like hickory. Mr. Garza stated they originally wanted cottonwood but said he is working with them to select different varieties other than the cottonwood because it would not be a good selection for that area.

Mr. Wulff recalled some other tree species that used to be in the park including sycamore and London plane. He also suggested using conifers and maybe some of the more colorful maples.

**City Street Trees**

Mr. Garza said he continues to go out on inspections as he gets calls, pointing out that South Porter Street is heavy on the list; a lot of them are not even City trees, but they need to come down. He said he is waiting until he has trees available to replace the ones removed so the whole neighborhood is not blown out.
Mr. Garza stated that NIPSCO is continuing with their circuit of trimming trees under their lines.

Mr. Wulff wanted people to know that if it is a good tree and it has been around for a long time, NIPSCO can work around it. He said the residents do have some say so but need to speak up.

Mr. Garza said that NIPSCO has started communicating with him more to let him know when and where they are working.

Ms. Henderson stated she understands that they must cut some of the trees down, but she pointed out that our canopy is not good and is only getting worse. She said she would hope that maybe NIPSCO could slow down a little bit.

Mr. Garza stated that they want to complete their circuits this season.

Ms. Henderson asked how NIPSCO is doing with their replacement trees.

Mr. Garza said they are not there yet; they are still in their cut mode.

Ms. Henderson asked if they have talked about it.

Mr. Garza stated that they have briefly talked about it. He said he would try to get more information from NIPSCO about their tree replacement program.

Mr. Wulff asked Mr. Garza for an update on the Old Grand Beach Road tree removal project. He said he received an email indicating that Amtrak shut the job down.

Mr. Garza replied that they did shut the job down on the final day. Amtrak has rules and regulations and the contractors the City hires are considered 3rd party and do not have the same privileges as the City would. The contractors don't have the correct insurance to work on Amtrak's land. They would have to apply directly to congress (as they own Amtrak's land) to get permission to do the work and they would also have to get federal rail insurance and a bond associated with the work which is very costly.

Mr. Wulff asked if the City could finish the project since there is not much left to do.

Mr. Garza said a federal officer told him that no more work is to be done out there and if work is to be done, he must first talk to the federal officer and the individual from NIPSCO who reported that this work was being done out there.

Mr. Garza pointed out that they did not respond to his request when he asked them what chemicals they were using, how much they were using, wind speeds when applying it, etc.
Discussion ensued between Mr. Wulff and Mr. Garza on what to do next to finish this job and get this area cleaned up. Mr. Garza said one option would be if he had a couple City employees that can do the work and the equipment to do it, he would just need to inform Amtrak that the City is going to do the work and when they are going to do it. Mr. Wulff said he would contact Mr. Garza to discuss it further to bring this project to a conclusion.

**Grant Application and Maintenance**
Mr. Garza reported that either City Science or City Tree awarded the City 50 trees out of a request for 100 but he would have to take classes on proper planting before the City could accept the trees.

**Purchasing and Tree Planting**
Mr. Wulff asked the status of the trees to be donated by Mr. Woodruff.

Mr. Garza said it is a slow process. The letter of intent is waiting to be signed by Mr. Woodruff. He said he might have to request it again this week.

Mr. Wulff told Mr. Garza that when he talks to Mr. Woodruff to ask him if the City should purchase the baskets and burlap. The funds to purchase those could come out of the $50,000 tree fund which was just earmarked.

Mr. Garza said he is anxious to get out there and commented that he along with Drew Hart from the US Forest Service and some City employees were considering scheduling a walk around out there within the next couple weeks. Mr. Garza stated that he continues trying to find a place to put the trees to care for them until they are planted throughout the neighborhoods. He said there was in fact a nursery located off Hitchcock Street, but the trees were only healed in and are now a disaster. He said those trees need to be cleared to start over. He pointed out that there is also a small area by the cooling tower which might be available for storing trees.

**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**
Regarding the survey, Mr. Garza reported that he received information back from Craig Phillips who indicated that even though the City did everything correctly, INDOT did not issue a number in time and missed a deadline which set us back on our release of funds.
Tree City Designation Maintenance
Mr. Garza said he was contacted by the DNR because they needed clarification on information that he did include on the application. He said they were very understanding because of his transition into the Forester position and some of the information being lost as far as volunteer hours being documented. A lack of that information lowered the numbers from the previous years. He explained to them he did not have that information and they indicated it was not an issue and they would override it. He said going forward he has everything documented.

Goals
(No report)

OLD BUSINESS
(Workman’s comp for insurance)
Mr. Wulff reported that he still has not yet heard anything back from the City Attorney. He commented that it is noted on the Arborist License list which contractors have workman’s comp, stating that it is surprising how many don’t have workman’s comp insurance even though it is required by state law.

Mr. Garza pointed out that without workman’s comp it restricts which contractors he can contract City work out to. With the few he can choose from he then gets put on a list with that contractor but because of their schedules it can take weeks for them to do the work. He wants people to understand that there is not an infinite list to choose from so the work is not going to get done the next day.

(Application for planting in tree lawn)
Mr. Wulff said Ms. Kalk was spearheading this and, in her absence, there is nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS
(None)

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS
Mrs. Anderson asked Mr. Stimley how his project is going.

Mr. Stimley replied that Ms. Kalk is going to work on the design of the zoo orchard over the next couple months.

Mrs. Anderson asked if he has applied for grants.

Mr. Stimley replied that he has not.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
(None)
**NEXT MEETING DATE**
President Wulff announced that the next regular meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2019.

**ADJOURNMENT**
The chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Henderson – seconded by Mrs. Anderson and unanimously approved.

The chair declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:50 p.m.

/Barbara Ginther, Secretary