

**Meeting Memorandum Minutes  
Town of Highland Tree Advisory Board**

1. Date, Time and Place of Meeting: Chair Bill Vargo called the meeting of the Board to order at 7:08 PM, on Thursday, February 21, 2019 in the Work Session Meeting Room at Town Hall.
2. Roll Call:
  - Board Members Present: Jim Colias, Ron Jackowski; Terry Krooswyk; Connie Sherbondy; Richard Underkofler; Bill Vargo; Judy Vaughn.
  - Guests Present: Mark Knesek; Public Works Operations Director; Rex Burton; Sanitary District Board; Andrea Nichols, NIPSCO Supervisor, Forestry Operations.
  - Absent: Public Works Director John Bach; Parks Director Trever Kinley.
3. General substance of matters proposed, discussed, or decided - record of all votes taken, by individual members if there is a roll call:
  - Minutes. Krooswyk moved to approve minutes of the previous meeting held January 17, 2019; seconded by Colias. Approved by unanimous consent.
4. Guest Presentation: Andrea Nichols, Certified Utility Arborist IN-3370AU, traveled to Highland from Goshen explain NIPSCO's work in progress in Highland; how NIPSCO may be able to assist with tree replacement; and our 2019 Arbor Day Event.
  - A. Andrea presented a PowerPoint and handout "Trees are Awesome: Why and How you Should Care". A copy has been retained for Board records.
  - B. Andrea came to Highland after some Board members expressed concern about recent tree trimming along the west side of Kennedy Avenue from 45th Street to Laporte Street. She was asked to inspect the work and clean up the appearance of the trees by either removing them or making the limbs more symmetrical, if she concluded the trimming did not meet arborist industry and NIPSCO standards.
  - C. Andrea explained the trimming was necessary to enable access for equipment to remove and replace transmission line equipment. She will send a crew back to re-trim a tree at 9358 Kennedy Avenue. The remainder of the trees of interest to the Board are located on private property upon which NIPSCO may not act.
  - D. Andrea suggested homeowners who desire free replacement trees may order them from an "Energy Savings Tree Program", which NIPSCO funds in collaboration with the Arbor Day Foundation. This program is equivalent to Arbor Day Foundation's "Community Canopy Program" for Fall 2018 plantings that was sponsored by Highland Community Foundation and a NIPSCO Environmental Action Grant.
  - E. NIPSCO will soon be removing trees along the Erie Lackawanna Trail to comply with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) requirements for 60 feet of clearance over gas pipelines. At no expense to the Town of Highland, an arborist crew contracted by NIPSCO will be relocating trees received from CommuniTree grants over recent years that were planted along the trail, but at locations not compliant with the required setback.

- F. Tom Swinford [phone: 219 629 2302; mail: [tswinford@arbormetrics.com](mailto:tswinford@arbormetrics.com)] is the NIPSCO designated arborist and best person to ask with any NIPSCO tree related questions in the Highland area.
5. Old Business:
- A. 2019 Arbor Day Event. Connie Sherbondy updated the group on the status of event plans.
- 1) At a meeting attended by Connie and Underkofler, Warren Elementary School Principal Christina Davis reported she would be pleased to host a Highland Community Arbor Day celebration.
  - 2) Christina reported she will launch a student poster contest with an Arbor Day theme. Our Tree Board will judge posters submitted at its March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting and select winning entries.
  - 3) When informed the Board intends to acquire a tree for planting by students at a campus location, Christina requested a Dogwood species. Tulip Tree, Catalpa or Ohio Buckeye species were unacceptable to her because they are messy and would grow too tall and wide. She wrote, “the Catalpa drops large seed pods that are a nightmare and huge mess. I would love to say that the Ohio Buckeye is a better choice, but we are planting it at an elementary school and a tree that drops toxic seeds, I will not plant.” *Postscript: Consider deleting Catalpa and Ohio Buckeye from Highland’s table of approved species.*
  - 4) Christina will order free sycamore tree seedlings which are available for distribution to 3rd grade students from nurseries of the IDNR, Division of Forestry.
  - 5) Notes of the meeting discussion and a suggested form of Arbor Day Proclamation were reviewed. The date of the event was changed from Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup> to Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> with Christina’s concurrence after it was discovered Arbor Day in Indiana always occurs the last Friday in April. The event will begin at 1:30 PM.
  - 6) *Postscript from March 4<sup>th</sup> Andrea Nichols email to Warren Elementary School Principal Christina Davis:* “Ms. Davis, Thanks so much for chatting with me this afternoon! Just to confirm, here are the details our Arbor Day Celebration in process. (We will be) Planting 1 White Flowering Dogwood. Tree will be delivered, dug and set by NIPSCO. Kids will be responsible for covering, mulching and watering with assistance from NIPSCO Arborist. Our arborist will also be available to give a "Tree Talk" with the kids for approx. 20 mins. We will also supply 300 individually bagged Douglas Fir seedlings for the kids to take home, along with our "Right Tree, Right Place" planting pamphlet. The school will call 811 for locates at least 1 week prior to event. NIPSCO MUST receive a confirmation code that the site is clear otherwise we cannot plant the tree.”

- B. Facebook Site: Jim Colias presented a status report on work to create a Tree Board Facebook site. He secured permission to provide links to periodic Purdue Extension Reports applicable to trees. An expert design consultant has been identified to donate time and expense to design the site and post photos of tree species recommended for planting in abundance.
- C. Topics Postponed. Due to the length and time of the meeting, other topics on the published agenda were postponed for discussion and possible action on the agenda of the next meeting, including: suggested amendments to Highland's Tree Ordinances; an application to be submitted by Underkofler for NIPSCO's 2019 Environmental Action Grants; and discussion regarding an update to Highland's Table of Unapproved/Approved Tree Species.
- 6. Next Meeting. The next board meeting will be held Thursday, March 21, 2019, beginning at 7 PM in an available Town Hall meeting room.
- 7. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM on approval of a motion by Colias; seconded by Vaughn.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Underkofler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "U".

Richard Underkofler, Secretary