

**Highland Tree Board
Agenda for Regular Meeting
Monday, September 21, 2026 – 6:30 PM
Lincoln Center, 2450 Lincoln St**

Roll Call:

Board Members:

Chair Blane Roberts	Executive Appointment	1/1/2025 – 1/1/2028
Secretary JT Mackey	Executive Appointment	1/1/2024 – 1/1/2027
Mary Ann Brunt	Executive Appointment	1/1/2024 – 1/1/2027
Teresa Lekan	Executive Appointment	1/1/2026 – 1/1/2029
Scott Polster	Executive Appointment	1/1/2025 – 1/1/2028
Arlene Sandrick	Executive Appointment	1/1/2025 -1/1/2028
David Taylor	Executive Appointment	1/1/2026 - 1/1/2029
Alex Robertson	Town Council's Board Liaison	1/1/2025 – 1/1/2026

Invited Town Staff: George Georgeff, Council President; Mark Herak, Clerk/Treasurer; Mark Knesek, Public Works Director; Tim Gembala, Public Works Operations Director; Mindi Ray, Superintendent, Parks & Recreation Department; Trevor Kinley, Parks Director; Maria Becerra, Redevelopment Director; Webupdates@theideafactory.us.com c/o Theresa Badovich & Robin Carlascio.

Others: Richard Underkofler, Ron Jackowski, 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 June 15, 2026. A copy is distributed with this agenda.

Old Business:

- **Little Calumet River South Watershed Seedling Project (15 Minutes).** Tree Board continues to discuss opportunity to replant the seedling project after unsuccessful 2025 planting. Joe Moore who served as the contractor for 2025 planting, joined the March meeting around 6:45 to answer questions and discuss opportunities for redoing the project. From Joe's perspective the seedlings were removed by wildlife. Joe Moore is willing to reorder trees from the state nursery. He recommends reconvening in late 2026 to order trees from the nursery for planting in 2027.

Tree Board members walked the planting site on June 22. Blane plans to provide an update on the project.

New Business:

- a. **Town Council Liaison Update – Alex Robertson (10 Minutes)**
- b. **August 11 Storm Discussion**
- c. **Upcoming Events:**

- i. **DNR Community and Urban Forestry’s Tree Stewards Workshop - Oct. 1 & 2 Noblesville ([agenda](#)) ([event page with registration](#))**
 - i. The mission of the Tree Stewards program is to:
 - 1. Educate participants on proper tree care, biology, and urban forestry practices
 - 2. Empower participants to advocate for community and urban forestry in their neighborhood, community, and state, and
 - 3. Connect participants to local volunteer opportunities.
- ii. **Partners in Community Forestry Conference – Nov. 18 & 19 St. Louis, MO ([event page](#))**

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 2026 Action Plan:
 - 1. Monthly sharing of ideas to keep the Board moving forward. **All Board Members.**
 - 2. Become a member of the Indiana Arborist Association and participate in the 2026 IAA Annual Conference. **Completed via Scott Polster.**
 - 3. Town Council appointments to expiring Board Member Terms. **Completed 2/9/26.**
 - 4. Board Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary Appointments. **Completed 1/26/26.**
 - 5. Update the Approved /Unapproved Species List. **Completed 6-15-26.**
 - 6. Organize an annual Arbor Day Event. **Completed 4-25-26.**
 - 7. Participate in Park Pride Day. **Completed 4-25-26**
 - 8. Post a Tree of the Month and/or Tree Care Tips on the Board’s Facebook Site and the Tree Board Page on the Town of Highland Website.
 - 9. Secure 1 or 2 expert speakers per year for community educational sessions on pertinent topics. **Completed 4-25-26.**
 - 10. Attend meetings of the Chamber of Commerce and NWI Urban Waters Partnership to maintain community relations and become aware of urban forestry grants.
 - 11. Recruit new Board Members for terms ending in January 2027.
 - 12. Renew application for Tree City USA recognition before December 31, 2026.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 19

Adjournment