

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Town of Highland Tree Board**  
**May 20, 2021**

1. Date, Time, and Place of Meeting: Secretary Underkofler called a zoom meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Roll Call:  
Board Members Present: James Colias, Ron Jackowski, Terry Krooswyk, Richard Underkofler  
Others Present: High School Sustainability Club - Michael Burns, Sarah Krick  
Absent: Joan Roback; Mark Schocke and Trever Kinley had another same time meeting
3. General substance of matters proposed, discussed, or decided - record of all votes taken by individual members if there is a roll call:
  - **Motion**: Krooswyk moved to approve minutes of a previous meeting held April 15, 2021; seconded by Colias and approved by unanimous consent of the members present.
4. Old Business:
  - a. Student Conservation Association (SCA) Plantings: An onsite meeting with SCA and Forest Service representatives to discuss proposed project locations, species, quantities, and priorities for 2021 plantings was held April 28<sup>th</sup>. This spring 3 trees were planted at the downtown parking lot as recommended by the project engineer; others will be planted behind the Central Fire Station and along the 4<sup>th</sup> and Conduit Street parkways. Next fall trees may be planted in Sandalwood Subdivision and in Highway Avenue parkways from 5<sup>th</sup> Street to Cline Avenue after securing approval of adjacent homeowners. Doorhangers used in past years available from Public Works may be used to survey the homeowners.
  - b. 2021 Arbor Day: An Arbor Day event was held April 30<sup>th</sup> at Warren Elementary School. Town Council President Roger Sheeman read and presented an Arbor Day Proclamation. Krooswyk Materials donated a tree that was planted by the 5th Grade PE class. Michael Burns, Sarah Krick, Jim Colias, and Ron Jackowski helped with the planting there as well as replacing another tree in the median of Parrish Avenue. Colias placed mulch at both locations. Colias and Jackowski provided initial watering to be followed by the HS Sustainability Club, which made a schedule for the watering to occur at least once a week adjusted for the weather.
  - c. Seedlings: Heather Oaks reported she has a lot of baby seedlings popping up in her yard at her home in Griffith. She inquired if we would like club members to care for them so they could plant them eventually? "I have some neat ones popping up like tulip trees and (I think) Ohio Buckeye." Jackowski is asked to coordinate with Heather for a date and time to identify whether the seedling species will be suitable for future planting.
5. New Business:
  - a. Tree Board Vacancies: Michael Burns and Sarah Krick reported they would be submitting applications after their final exams are done.
    - **Motion**: Colias moved to recommend the appointment of Burns and Krick; seconded by Krooswyk and approved by unanimous consent of the members present.
  - b. Facebook Site: Theresa Badovich d/b/a The Idea Factory updated the Board's page on the Town's Website by inserting past Facebook posts. Colias thanked Theresa and reported the number of likes and shares of pages has increased.

- c. Community Presentations: Colias confirmed Lindsey Purcell of Purdue and another ISA certified local arborist (Alan Ross, who operates a local tree care service) would be willing to provide a community presentation on a desired tree care topic. Colias confirmed Highland Library is willing to be a fall/winter presentation venue and advertising partner. He suggested Main Square Park for summer/fall hands-on presentations: Purcell for planting; Ross for pruning.
  - d. Media Releases: Underkofler suggested asking local media to publish periodic news articles on timely tree care topics. Colias offered to contact relatives employed by the NWI Times and the Post Tribune for assistance.
  - e. Stationery: Colias designed a suggested template upon the Town’s Letterhead for board review. It’s intended to be used to introduce our board to service clubs and vendors and to subsequently solicit donations for our endeavors.
    - Motion**: Underkofler moved to approve the stationary; seconded by Krooswyk and approved by unanimous consent of the members present.
  - f. Approved/Unapproved Tree Species: Jackowski submitted a first draft of an updated PDF document adding links to the unapproved section enabling a visual identification of the species. It’s a work in progress. Ron intends to add links for approved species.
6. Discussion Topics:
- a. Operating Plan: Colias led a review of the Board purpose and asked members to volunteer for tasks for an update to the 2021/2022 Operating Plan.

	Task	Volunteers
1	Apply for available grants; coordinate and tally number of trees granted	Underkofler
2	Monitor and motivate Parks & Street Department staff to update tree removals and new plantings in the Highland ESRI ARC-GIS tree inventory application	Krooswyk
3	Update Approved/Unapproved Species List	Jackowski
4	Monthly Tree of the Month & Tree Care Tips on Facebook Site	Colias
5	Community Presentations on Tree Care Topics	Colias
6	Introduce our Board to service clubs and vendors; subsequently solicit donations for our endeavors	Colias & Underkofler
7	Assemble Park & Street Department tree care labor expense data and submit 2021 Tree City Application (December 2021)	Underkofler
8	Town Council President Arbor Day Proclamation (April 11, 2022)	Underkofler & Griffith
9	Participate in Park Pride Day (April 23, 2022)	All
10	Arbor Day Event (Potentially at Highland Christian School - April 29, 2022)	Krooswyk

- b. Future Meetings: There was consensus of members present that Board meetings will be canceled in July, August, and December 2021. Instead, we will communicate by email during these months.
- c. Fall 2021 CommuniTree Grant Trees: Facebook and other media notice will be given that homeowners who desire free trees should submit requests for fall parkway street tree plantings to Public Works Director Mark Knesek [mail: [mknesk@highland.in.gov](mailto:mknesk@highland.in.gov)]. Include a street address, phone number and an email address with the request.

- d. Tree Pruning: Krooswyk reported CommuniTree Grant Trees planted at Southridge School need significant pruning. **Postscript**: Jackowski submitted a 5/21/21 email re: the Southridge trees (along Liable Rd @ Cady Ditch) – “Sycamores not looking great, some newly sprouted growth has died; they also have many dead branches below 5' that should be trimmed. Typically, sycamores are a tough tree, it's unusual to see them struggle. Birches could be limbed-up but not needed, lower branches appear healthy. One of the 3 closest to the ditch has chlorotic leaves. The multi-trunked Ironwood are healthy and should not be limbed-up, this is how they grow.” Around town. “Across the street, trees in Sheppard Park look good, some appear to have had planting sites trimmed and re-mulched, likely on Park Pride Day. A silver maple's future is in doubt where vandals have severely stripped the trunk bark. Boulevard Estates 44th St. - 3 Shingle Oaks in the median are dead, 1 tulip tree clearly hit by a mower, leafed out but cracked at root flare, will not survive. The 2 remaining of the 6 planted there look OK. The dogwood at Warren and the maple on Parrish look good so far. I watered the maple this morning.”
- e. Donations for Pruning: Underkofler suggested seeking private donations to help underwrite parkway tree pruning expense. Since 2018 practically all of the Town's tree care budgets have been consumed for removing diseased trees and planting replacements. The Urban Forest Management Plan divided the town into seven geographic areas to incrementally tackle pruning costs. This year the cost by the Town's contractor will be: Medium Trees (12" to 24" DBH) = \$240 each); Large Trees (Greater than 24" DBH) = \$375 each.
- f. Donations for Tree Identification: Jackowski suggested seeking private donations for tree species identification plaques (perhaps with QR Codes) in parks and along streets and bike trails.
7. Next Meeting: June 17, 2021 face-to-face at Main Square Park rather than a zoom meeting if the weather forecast is favorable.
8. Adjournment:
- **Motion**: Krooswyk moved to adjourn at 8:17 pm; seconded by Jackowski and approved by unanimous consent of the members present.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Underkofler, Secretary