

**TREE BOARD – City of Columbia City**  
2/20/2024 – 6:00pm

**MINUTES**

- Roll Call (Present) Janice Daniel, Brian Smithers, Jeff Bleijerveld, Brent Bockelman, Larry Walter (Absent) Chip Hill, Jennifer Romano, Jessica Burkett
- President Janice Daniel called the meeting to order and asked from a motion to approve the January minutes. Brent made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Larry. A vote was taken; all voted “aye”.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- Future Meetings
  - Meetings will continue on the third Thursday of every month, but at 6:00pm and in the council chambers.
- Pruning Bids
  - Have been sent out
  - Janice will follow up with Chip regarding status
- Financial Update
  - None at this time
- Tree Steward Training
  - Still waiting to hear word on training to be held May 16-17 2024 in Huntertown
- Board Member Guidelines
  - Brent is still working on those and will report back at a later date
- Executive Planning Session
  - We agreed to a two-hour meeting on Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:00am at Larry’s home – 526 E Jefferson St.
- Radio Road Project
  - We reviewed possible planting layouts
  - Plantings include arborvitae, redbud, viburnum, sweet gum, tulip poplar, plane tree

**NEW BUSINESS**

- New Members

- We welcomed Brian Smithers and look forward to having Jennifer Romano join us at a future meeting
- Arbor Day Activities
  - Janice will contact Mary Raber and Little Schools regarding activities and will report back to us next month
  - Larry will contact the staff of Mary Raber to discuss possibly planting trees at the end of the parking lot at Van Buren.
  - Also discussed handing out seedlings to students to plant at home
- First Friday Activities
  - We will follow up during our executive retreat, but there is definite interest
- Update on Winter Tree Removal
  - Chip will provide an update next month
- Updating TreeKeeper
  - Larry shared that we have 51% of our potential locations for tree planting covered
- Indiana Arborist Grant Opportunity - Janice
  - Due to a shortage of arborist in Indiana, money has been set aside by the State of Indiana to provide the training needed for new arborists to obtain certification.
  - We will research who should apply for funding (i.e. city, tree board, individual) and follow up next month
- Grant Writing
  - Discussed contracting with grant writers to help us apply for some of the funding that is available
  - Larry has been in dialogue regarding funding opportunities with a grant writer for the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation and will inquire if there might be interest in helping us pursue some funding opportunities

**Meeting adjourned at 7:06.**

Submitted by Jeff Bleijerveld, Secretary