

TREE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 16, 2024

Meeting called to order by Janice Daniel, President, at 5:30 pm

Roll Call: Present, Janice Daniel, Brent Bockelman, Jessica Burkett, Larry Walter, Chip Hill

Absent, Jeff Bleijerveld

It was announced that Jennifer Romano was appointed as a Tree Board member by Council. She will be informed of future meetings by Chip. Discussion of Sam St. Clair as potential member followed.

Minutes of December 19, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved by motion from Bockelman seconded by Burkett.

Old Business

-The Tree Pruning Specification document that was sent to all board members by Chip for review, was discussed and as no changes deemed needed, it will be used as written to be sent for bidding purposes, to tree pruning contractors

-Discussion of how many contractors could provide bid on tree pruning contract. It was determined that any number of contractors could provide a bid.

-Financial update. Chip reported that the Tree Board has \$12,000.00 in its 2024 budget that was carried over from the 2023 budget. It was noted that there was actually \$24,000.00 unspent in our 2023 budget, but \$12,000.00 of that amount was allocated for another purpose. It was determined that in the future, the Tree Board should audit the budget more carefully to assure the full implementation of funds available. There will be additional funds from the 2024 City budget in the amount of \$38,000.00 to \$48,000.00. Chip will provide the exact amount at the next Tree Board meeting.

-The State offered Tree Steward Training program date was discussed.

-Tree Board Member Guidelines were discussed. Bockelman will compose a rough draft of guidelines and will bring to the next meeting for discussion and comment.

NEW BUSINESS

-The tree pruning contracts from past years have not been located. It was determined that in the future these contracts be signed by both the City and the awarded contractor. A copy with signatures will be retained in the Tree Board files.

NEW BUSINESS (cont)

-2024 Arbor Day activities were discussed. Mary Raber and Little Turtle Schools will be contacted for their participation. How to make Arbor Day into a broader City-Wide event was discussed.

-The need for an Executive Tree Board meeting was discussed. This meeting would focus on all aspects of increasing the percentage of tree canopy within the City. Walter will develop an outline of topics that would be considered in such a meeting and bring it to the next general meeting.

-Future meetings will be held in the Council Chambers and will begin at 6:00 pm. Notification of this change will be sent to all members by Chip.

-The Redevelopment Commission's project of screening the Whitley County Highway Facility from IN-9 was discussed. General enthusiasm for project was exhibited with lots of conceptual ideas being generated. More information about the site is needed and Chip will be in contact with the State.

Meeting was adjourned, with motion from Walter and seconded by Bockelman, unanimously.

Next meeting will be February 20, 2024 held in Council Chambers at 6:00 pm.

Submitted by: Larry Walter