

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY TREE BOARD
APRIL 4, 2007**

The Michigan City Tree Board met in a regular meeting in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall Building, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City, Indiana, on Wednesday, April 4, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman Dave Morlan called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Patricia Boy (6:45 p.m.), Dan Carabine, John Flegel, Robert Frame, Dave Morlan, and Mick Wulff (6:10 p.m.)

Members absent: William Bolton

Staff present: City Forester Frank Seilheimer and Secretary Debbie Wilson.

Visitors present: Dr. Jeff Fisher

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of March 7, 2007.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Carabine – seconded by Mr. Flegel and unanimously approved.

SECRETARY-TREASURERS REPORT

The financial report ended March 31, 2007 was submitted and reviewed. It was noted that the budget has not been approved yet.

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the Secretary-Treasurers report.

A motion to approve the report was made by Mr. Frame – seconded by Mr. Carabine and unanimously approved.

CLAIMS

The Secretary requested approval of the monthly Board member pay for Dave Morlan in the amount of \$50 and secretarial services for Debbie Wilson in the amount of \$200.

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the claims.

A motion to approve the claims was made by Mr. Flegel – seconded by Mr. Carabine and unanimously approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman allowed the guest to address the Board at this time.

Dr. Jeff Fisher introduced himself and stated that he volunteered to help with the Zone 6 North End Development Project. It was suggested to enhance the arboretum type idea in the park. He stated that in most of the natural settings he has visited, there is a post with a description of the species along with some type of interesting lore. Dr. Fisher has a graduate degree in animal ecology and along with that he has studied species of grasses and trees. He volunteered to make small paragraphs of facts about the trees and note some of the things that might be found around the tree. He could also indicate what the species was used for and by whom. For example, the scouring rush was used by the pioneers to scrub pots and pans; the yellow poplar was used in butcher blocks because the wood does not take up a lot stain and it does not take up taste and odor. He also suggested displaying a varnished sample of how the tree looks when it is cut to show what the natural grain looks like, and possibly do a bore to show the age of the tree.

MICK WULFF ENTERED AND WAS NOTED PRESENT FOR THE RECORD.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that he likes the concept but noted that there is little variety of species in the park due to the type of soil. He said the project is doable but the soil would have to be amended to allow for different species to be planted. He will have to coordinate with the Park Department. Mr. Seilheimer suggested getting everything set up now and planting the trees in the fall. He will provide Dr. Fisher with a species list so he can get started on his end.

The Secretary was directed to add a subtitle on the agenda under the City Park Tree Committee Reports – “Tree Walk”.

Discussion and updates will continue on this matter at future meetings.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arbor Day: Mr. Seilheimer stated that he would like to postpone our Arbor Day celebration and incorporate it with the tree walk in the fall. He would like to see the project laid out ahead of time and have the trees planted during the Arbor Day celebration.

Board members liked the idea but felt that something should also be done on the actual Arbor Day.

Board members discussed a variety of ideas and agreed on having the dedication of Pullman Forest on April 28th, and during the dedication introduce the tree walk project which would take place in the fall (October).

MRS. BOY ENTERED AND WAS NOTED PRESENT FOR THE RECORD.

Mr. Flegel made a motion to accept Mr. Seilheimer's proposal for Arbor Day activities (dedication of Pullman Forest and introduction of tree walk project) on April 28th – seconded by Mr. Wulff and unanimously approved.

Mr. Flegel made a motion that the proposed proclaimed Arbor Fest activities (tree walk) be held on a tentative date of October 7th – seconded by Mr. Carabine and unanimously approved.

City Park Trees: Mr. Seilheimer reported that stumps were ground out in Washington Park and final clean up from storm damage will take place next week. Funds are now available for Gardena Park. Trees will be planted and a portion of the fence removed.

City Street Trees: Tomorrow Mr. Seilheimer and Mr. Morlan will plant trees and do clean up on Boyd Circle, Tennessee Street, Elston Street, and Green Street. All other street tree planting will take place in the fall.

Education-Public Relations: Mrs. Boy noted that she talked to a member of the school board and a member of the Shirley Heinz Foundation regarding the property the school board wants to buy for moving Pine School. It is a 66 acre piece of land but the seller does not want to split it. Shirley Heinz will be contacting the school board to see about cooperating in buying the land and saving a portion of it for a natural area.

Grant Application & Maintenance: Mr. Seilheimer reported that planting has started in Pullman Forest. Planting of the large trees should be completed by the end of April. The seedlings will be planted in the fall. He pointed out that it will look sparse at first, but it will look good in 5 years when the plants are mature.

Mr. Flegel asked if anything has been resolved for watering of the area.

Mr. Morlan stated that they have a 1600 gallon tank on a trailer and they will hook up a pump to it.

Purchasing and Tree Planting: Mr. Seilheimer will wait to purchase trees for fall planting.

Planning Department: No report.

Urban Forest Plan Maintenance: Mr. Flegel and Mr. Seilheimer continue to work on the presentation for the Council.

Mr. Seilheimer noted that the GIS extension program should be available in the next couple weeks for Michigan City, LaPorte, and LaPorte County.

Tree City: Mr. Seilheimer reported that Michigan City received the Tree City designation as well as the Tree City USA Growth Award. The City could receive the Sterling City Award if they receive the Growth Award 10 years in a row. There are only 2-3 cities in Indiana that have received the Sterling City Award.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Seilheimer stated that he will order the equipment which the Board approved purchasing last year for Save the Dunes.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Flegel thanked Dr. Fisher for attending the meeting and presenting his proposal. Mr. Flegel stated that it is an excellent outreach project and it dovetails in nicely with things the Board wants to do.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 2, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Debbie Wilson, Secretary