

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
MICHIGAN CITY TREE BOARD
JUNE 6, 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, June 6, 2007, at 6:00 p.m. local time; the date, hour, and place duly established for the holding of said meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Dave Morlan called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called with the following noted present: William Bolton (entered 6:15 p.m.), Patricia Boy, John Flegel, Robert Frame, Dave Morlan, and Mick Wulff. Dan Carabine was absent. (6 present, 1 absent) Staff in attendance: City Forester Frank Seilheimer and Secretary Debbie Wilson. There was no public in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 2, 2007.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Frame – seconded by Mrs. Boy and unanimously approved.

SECRETARY-TREASURERS REPORT

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

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the financial report.

A motion to approve the financial report was made by Mr. Flegel – seconded by Mrs. Boy and unanimously approved.

CLAIMS

The Secretary requested approval of the monthly Board member pay for Mr. Morlan in the amount of \$50 and secretarial services in the amount of \$200. In addition, the Secretary requested approval of the 2nd quarter Board member pay.

The Chair entertained a motion for approval of the claims.

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

COMMUNICATIONS

City Forester Frank Seilheimer was welcomed as a full-time City employee as of June 4th.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Arbor Day: The Committee continues to organize for the tree walk in the fall as the Arbor Day celebration.

City Park Trees: Mr. Seilheimer reported that he continues to remove trees and stumps in Washington Park around the Port Authority and Fedder's Alley. Work is scheduled around park activities.

The fire on Krueger Hill did not do too much damage and is already showing signs of recovery. If the recovery needs any help, seedlings can be planted in March-April next year.

Tree Walk: Mr. Seilheimer reported that as the trees are removed in the park, spaces become available for planting during the tree walk. He will continue to look for species of trees to plant.

City Street Trees: The City has contracted out for trimming of 18 large trees. No removals have been contracted out. The Street Department is trimming the smaller trees.

Education: As a matter of public relations, Mr. Wulff pointed out that the news paper had an article which announced the hiring of Frank as the City's full-time Forester.

MR. BOLTON ENTERED AND WAS NOTED PRESENT FOR THE RECORD.

Grant Application and Maintenance: Mr. Seilheimer reported that Pullman Forest is 80% complete. The white pines have been planted. A couple more red maples will be planted in the fall and seedlings from the DNR will be planted in the spring. All but six of the witch hazel died. He added that there have been signs of habitat within the forest. Mr. Seilheimer will prepare the quarterly report requesting drawdown for monies spent.

Purchasing and Tree Planting: Mr. Seilheimer reported that 48 large pin oaks have been purchased; 40 small pin oaks, 77 choke cherry. All have been healed in at the City nursery and are ready for fall planting.

Mr. Frame asked where the large pin oaks will be planted.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that some would be planted along Washington Street across from St. Stans, some will go in the park, and some at City Hall.

Mr. Frame noted his concern with the roots from the large trees heaving up the newly constructed sidewalks on Washington Street.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that there should not be a problem as long as the trees are kept trimmed.

Planning Department: No report.

Mrs. Boy noted that she got a call regarding the expansion of Weatherstone Village on property located on the west side of Hitchcock across from Striebel Pond and the possibility of clear cutting trees for the project.

Even though the property is not located in the city, it was felt that the Board should be proactive and send a lettering asking them to save as many trees as possible and not to clear cut.

The Board directed the Secretary to send a letter to the County Planner.

Urban Forest Plan Maintenance: Mr. Flegel mentioned that there has been discussion by the Board in the past about revisiting the street tree inventory with summer help. He asked the status.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that he can do it during the winter months. He said the format on the current inventory program is good, but the data needs to be updated.

Tree City: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board reviewed the 2008 proposed budget.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mrs. Boy stated that at the last Council meeting, Paul Przybylinski complained about the large black walnut trees that were cut down on Washington Street during the storm sewer project. He was upset that the Tree Ordinance does not cover City employees and damage.

Mr. Seilheimer explained that it is not a case of a City employee not being covered. It is a matter of poor communication and restitution with contractors. He said that the language has to be written into the contract before the project starts to avoid infrastructure conflicts. There was a failure to communicate what was on the blueprint and what was to be amended. He would need to go out and identify the trees to be saved prior to the start of construction.

A motion was made by Mr. Flegel to send a letter to the Board of Works, the City Engineer, and the Sanitary District advising them to give the City Forester notice of projects so he can identify trees to be saved before the engineering is done on the projects – seconded by Mr. Frame and unanimously approved.

The Board directed the Secretary and City Forester to send a letter.

Mr. Frame pointed out that since Michigan City has been designated as a Tree City, we need to make every effort to save as many trees as possible during construction.

Mr. Bolton stated that he received a request from Bob Behler to replace two trees that came down during the storm last year.

Mr. Seilheimer stated that trees cannot be put back in those locations because there is a 12" gas line going down the center of the tree lawn.

Mrs. Boy had a request for trees to be planted in an area between Village Green and Suburban Estates.

Mr. Morlan explained that the concrete debris has to be removed before trees can be planted. He will let the Street Department know and maybe they can do it when they have some extra time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Due to the 4th of July holiday falling on the next scheduled meeting date, Board members agreed to have the meeting on the following Wednesday (July 11th).

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Debbie Wilson, Secretary