

August 12, 2026 Tree Allies Meeting Minutes

Call to order: 6:10 PM

Members present: Larry Beiter, Sarah Gray, Linda Straub, Bernie Denning, Mallory Abel, Grace Berrios, Amber Lane, Tim Lambert joined at 6:20.

Public present: Bennet Abel

July Meeting Minutes: July Meeting minutes were sent to the Board for review prior to the meeting. Comments were received and incorporated.

Grace made a motion to approve the July meeting minutes and Linda seconded the motion. All voted Aye, the motion was approved by the group unanimously.

Membership Appointments: Mallory will be stepping down as Chairperson. Chris has offered to take over. This issue will be reintroduced at the next meeting for a vote.

Tim Lambard joined at 6:20.

The video streaming system began experiencing issues with the camera and microphone that continued through the rest of the meeting. The system was restarted but difficulties continue.

Landscaping Contract: The Town landscaping contract is up for renewal. The Allies discussed at length the dangers of herbicide use around trees and plants as well as the damage caused by mowers and string trimmers. They would like the landscaping company to stop the use of herbicides around trees and avoid any damage from mowers and string trimmers. Bernie will email Kim Sauro and Larry will ask at the next board meeting if the contractor can be cautioned and if possibly the contract can be amended to prevent these practices.

Watering Committee: Larry has not worked further on the use of the watering trailer. The Gator has been sufficient for tree watering. Two newer volunteers have left the group and we are back to the same core team as last year.

Master Plan Committee: No Updates

Parade Committee: The group discussed the plans for the parade. The purchase of die-cut stickers and candy as giveaways was discussed. The parade progression was a little too fast last year to keep up while handing out candy. The Tree Allies were last in line last year and would like to possibly avoid that position this year. The Allies discussed the budget, available funds and needs for the parade. Mallory estimates that we would need no more than \$350 in funds, less than half of our remaining total funds. Authority to spend this will be requested at the Town Council meeting

Showcasing Tree Dedication Nominations Update: Mallory provided some details on the plaques she has been researching. The Allies discussed some details of the nomination program, including cost, process, objectives and the limits of our role. Larry has drafted a procedure for Council/Allies review. The Allies discussed various approaches for installing a plaque. The desire to plant a larger tree (5 gallon vs. 3-gallon pot) to make more of a statement was discussed. A tiny sapling may not seem like an appropriate recognition of a long-time resident's contributions. The opportunity to dedicate trees being planted as part of the master plan was discussed.

Tree Sale: At the National Night Out event, a number of residents expressed interest in the Tree Sale. We would like for the website to be live for the Fall festival or sooner to allow us to help visitors place orders during the event. We can bring laptop or tablet to support. We would like to have a visual display/resource available for the festival. The picture board used last year was very helpful. We would like to offer our services in helping residents select the right tree for the right location. We would potentially visit the planting site to assist assuming it is in the Clermont area. Our resources for this service are limited but we do not expect a significant number of requestors.

DNR Grants: The Indiana Dept of Natural Resources has a Small Town, Big Trees Grant available that will provide from \$500 to \$5000 in matching funds for an eligible tree canopy related project. This can be for planting or planning type activities such as a tree inventory. Larry attended training on the software/process for submitting grant requests. It is not too complicated; we would need a good cost estimate and a work plan with details of the work being done and timeline. The current grant window ends on Sept 11. The project must be complete within 18 months.

Adjournment:

Sarah motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15. Bernie seconded the motion. All voted Aye, the motion was approved by the group unanimously.