



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

Monday February 8, 2016 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

Present: Chair Cathy Bleier, Vice Chair Ralph Boniello, Michael Charlton Robert Hrubes, Yan Linhart Steve Price, City Council Liaison Janet Abelson and Staff Liaison Stephen Prée.

Absent: Member Karen Christian.

2. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items: No public comment.

3. Report from the City Council Liaison: Janet Abelson reported:

- The formation of a Centennial Committee to develop activities to commemorate the 100 year anniversary of the incorporation of the City of El Cerrito and she invited Tree Committee members to get involved.
- City Council received public comment advocating transition to a “greener” City vehicle fleet.
- Annual City Earth Day opportunities with an invitation to the Tree Committee to sponsor an event.

4. Action Items:-

A. Motion to adopt the minutes from the December 14, 2015 meeting and to adopt the minutes from the January 11, 2016 meeting: Hrubes, second Boniello; passed unanimously.

B. Motion to recommend to City Council the appointment of Mary Torrusio to the Tree Committee: Boniello; second: Price; passed unanimously.

5. Report from the City Arborist: Stephen Prée reported :

- Tree Committee members Ralph Boniello, Steve Price and Mike Srago were appointed to their second four-year term on the Tree Committee by City Council on January 19, 2016
- b.) City Council awarded a contract to West Coast Arborists, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$67,000 for City Tree Pruning, Removal and Maintenance Services, also on January 19, 2016.

6. Tree Committee Activities, Calendar and Work Plan Update:

- A. California/El Cerrito Arbor Week activities and CA Re Leaf Grant status: Committee Chair Cathy Bleier gave a report summarizing activities to date including a.) Completion of the draft grant application b.) Proposed schedule of events: March 9 tree planting at Cerrito Vista Park with El Cerrito Garden Club and Prospect Sierra 5th grade science students; March 12 Tree Planting in Arlington Park with interested members of the public.

Discussion: Regarding the value of having the Tree Committee perform some of the initial maintenance (watering) work; as the Grant Applicant, the Tree Committee is responsible to assure sufficient irrigation during the 3 year establishment period. Maintenance events such as these could help develop a Corps of Tree Care Volunteers. Prée will investigate feasibility of contract watering.

Motion, Hrubes: Proceed with grant application understanding that Tree Committee members may be required to perform some of the monthly watering; Second: Linhart; passed with one abstention: Srago.

Vice Chair Boniello: Tree Committee requests support from the City for watering the new grant trees.

Motion, Boniello: Allocate \$300 to provide refreshments for the Arlington Park Tree Planting from Tree Committee funds; Second, Linhart; Passed unanimously.

- B. Tree Care Workshop: Steve Price reported that due to conflicting schedules, the Tree Care event would be supplanted by the Arlington Park tree planting activity. He noted that the workshop is intended to inform the Tree Committee members on tree maintenance standards per Urban Forest Management Plan. The event will be rescheduled for early November 2016.
- C. Revisions to the City Tree ordinance: the ad hoc subcommittee scheduled a new meeting for February 18, 2016. (Vice Chair Ralph Boniello, Michael Charlton, Robert Hrubes, Mike Srago)
- D. 2016 Work Plan: Chair Bleier reported on the significant progress made to date in meeting the goals and objectives of the previous work plan including: providing care for tree plantings; giving input/comments on the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and the City's Urban Greening Plan; revising the City Tree List; and completing applications for urban forestry grants.

Discussion: The Committee should begin work on the next Work Plan shortly in order to meet the schedule for a presentation to City Council in summer 2016. Vice Chair Boniello recommended making the Tree City USA certification a 2016 Work Plan priority. Chair Bleier noted that one of the requirements for the Tree City USA qualification is a Tree Care Ordinance.

7. Announcements and future agenda items: no announcements.

Future Agenda Items:

Motion, Boniello: Minimize the March Tree Committee agenda to shorten the meeting to address just the issue of sponsoring an Earth Day event; Second, Linhart; Passed unanimously.

- Earth Day Event
- Revising the City Tree Ordinance
- 2016 Work Plan
- Officer elections

8. Adjournment- 9:05 p.m.