



Staff Liaison
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MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
Urban Forest Committee

March 9, 2020

Hillside Room, El Cerrito City Hall
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

This Meeting Place is Wheelchair Accessible

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING: Chair Torrusio called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL– Present: Chair Mary Torrusio, Members Cathy Bleier, Yan Linhart, Robin Mitchell.

Absent: Vice Chair Robert Hrubes, Council Liaison Janet Abelson
Also present: Staff Liaison Stephen Prée, members of the public: Sue Duncan, Paul Duncan, Buddy Akacic, Sandra Sprague, Joel Soden, Anne Ogonowski.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS –

- Buddy Akacic said he was delighted to attend the meeting and wants to join the Committee.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS-

- Chair Torrusio attended the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) and reported that the EQC would be happy to work together with the UFC on an Earth Day project.
- Robin Mitchell announced a symposium: Home Landscaping in a Changing Climate in Marin County:
<http://www.marinconservationleague.org/events/calendar/events/symposium-home-landscaping-in-a-changing-climate.html>
- Cathy Bleier attended the February Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) meeting, she expressed her concern that the PRC may vote to divert some Measure H funds from Hillside Natural Area vegetation management.

4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS - Staff Liaison Prée informed the UFC that ECFD wants to make a wildfire prevention presentation to the UFC at the May or June meeting; Prée is working with interested residents on contracted street tree planting. He announced an upcoming workshop on tree care

for birds and wildlife on March 11 that he will not attend; he attended a 2/25 workshop on vegetation control without chemicals hosted by the California Invasive Plant Council (CAIPC)/ East Bay Regional Parks District and a tree care workshop for San Rafael residents on 2/29 hosted by the California Urban Forest Council.

5. ACTION ITEMS – Approval of the February 10, 2020 meeting minutes:

Moved/Second: Linhart, Mitchell; unanimous.

6. URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR AND WORK PLAN UPDATE:

- A. Volunteer tree care workshop March 15- discussion of event details: no food, bring your own gloves, not designed for kids; ad-hoc subcommittee (Mitchell, Price, Prée) to finalize.
- B. Community wildfire prevention- Cathy Bleier commented on the excellent presentation February 10 by Dr. Joe McBride. Discussion of the 1987 HNA Fuel Management Plan, vegetation management activities, grant opportunities (no Diablo Fire Safe Grant available this year), Make El Cerrito Fire Safe has a grant for the Kerr property. Ms. Bleier said that Recreation Director Chris Jones responded to her HNA management questions by suggesting that the UFC could make recommendations to PRC regarding specific capital improvement projects (CIP); she inquired about a new HNA vegetation management plan- Prée said that ECFD was investigating feasibility. Discussion: Measure H money already designated for HNA fuel reduction should remain. **Motion:** wildfire ad-hoc subcommittee (Bleier Hrubes) to draft a letter for PRC to retain the \$70,000 designated for priority vegetation management projects as determined by City staff. **Moved / Second:** Mitchell, Linhart; unanimous.

Paul Duncan reiterated his desire to become a member of the UFC community wildfire prevention ad-hoc subcommittee. **Motion/ moved/ Second:** Bleier, Torrusio; unanimous.

- C. El Cerrito Earth Day *April 18*- Chair Torrusio recommended collaboration with EQC on fire fuel reduction project – details to be determined and informed by Prée and EQC by next UFC meeting April 13.

7. NEXT MONTH'S CITY COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE ASSIGNMENTS

- Yan Linhart will attend the EQC meeting March 10
- Robert Hrubes will attend the PRC meeting March 25
- Cathy Bleier or Chair Torrusio will attend the EQC meeting April 14
- Robin Mitchell will attend the PRC meeting April 22

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- El Cerrito Earth Day
- UFC Recruitments
- Tree care corps
- Community wildfire concerns
- Tree planting opportunities

9. ADJOURNMENT- Chair Torrusio adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Mary Torrusio, Chair or Robert Hrubes, Vice Chair

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular Urban Forest Committee meeting of March 9, 2020 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison