



MINUTES REGULAR MEETING OF THE Urban Forest Committee

October 14, 2019

Staff Liaison
Stephen Prée | 510-559-7685
spree@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us

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:** Members Cathy Bleier, Robin Mitchell, Steve Price, Michael Srago. Also present: Council Liaison Gabriel Quinto, Yan Linhart, Staff Liaison Stephen Prée; members of the public, Jonathon Marshall, Mark Mendell, Alexis Davis Miller, Sandra Sprague. **Absent:** Vice-Chair Robert Hrubes.
- 2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS** –Jonathon Marshall commented that as a property owner he wants safe City trees. Sandra Sprague said that she is also interested in safe trees for El Cerrito.
- 3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS-** Robin Mitchell shared her interest in an article on Native Plants and Fire Safety from Fremontia Volume 38 #3 (https://cnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Fremontia_Vol38-No2-3.pdf) and plans to investigate how much work the UC Extension has done regarding the identification of fire prone plants.
Steve Price reported that he had separate conversations with Councilmembers Paul Fadelli and Greg Lyman regarding trees and fire risk; both conversations turned to a Cal Fire grant awarded to Dr. Joe McBride regarding managing fire in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons (<https://www.dailycal.org/2019/10/03/cal-fire-issues-grant-to-uc-berkeley-for-managing-vegetation-for-wildfire-safety/>).
- 4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS** - Council Liaison Quinto reminded the Committee to vote in the November 5 Special Election and described Measure H, the renewal of a parcel tax at the same historic rate to maintain Park and Recreation programs. He described the cost and benefits and encouraged everyone to support the measure. Mr. Price asked if the monies could be used for fire abatement work in the Hillside Natural Area. Councilman Quinto said yes, and it could be used to plant and maintain more City trees. Ms. Bleier asked who will manage the money and decide its distribution. Mr. Quinto said that the Finance Department and the Financial Advisory Board would manage the funds. The Committee discussed how funds may or may not be used.

Prée reported briefly on recent urban forest activities in El Cerrito including tree limb failures and progress in awarding a contract for the 2019 Hillside Natural Areas Fire Fuel Reduction Project. He also relayed details of the City's Boards,

Commissions and Committees attendance policy. A discussion followed regarding the potential value of meeting without a quorum, if the situation arose.

5. ACTION ITEMS

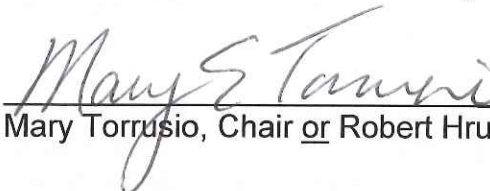
- Approval of the August 12, 2019 meeting minutes: **Moved / Second:** Price / Bleier; unanimous.
- Recommend to City Council the reappointment of Yan Linhart to the UFC for a second term: **Moved / Second:** Mitchell / Bleier; unanimous.

6. **URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR AND WORK PLAN UPDATE-** discussion: Ms. Mitchell recommended that an ad-hoc subcommittee meet to refine the work plan and bring it back to the full Committee in November. Mr. Price wants to move forward with the development of a tree care corps, Ms. Mitchell agreed to work together on this with Price and report back to the Committee. A general discussion regarding elements of the work plan followed.

7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

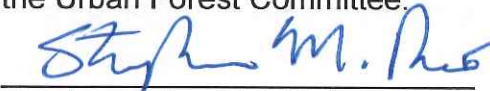
- 2019/2021 Work Plan refinement
- Possible actions to address community wildfire concerns
- Development of a tree care corps
- Historic native landscapes
- Tree planting opportunities
- Tree care presentation (Prée)

8. **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 October 14, 2019 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.



Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison