



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

Monday January 9, 2017 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

Present: Chair Ralph Boniello, Vice Chair Steve Price; Members Cathy Bleier, Robert Hrubes, Yan Linhart, Mike Srago, Mary Torrusio.
Also present: Staff Liaison Stephen Prée.

2. Committee Member Announcements:

- A. Cathy Bleier reported on her completion of an Audubon Master Birders Course paper titled "The Role of Tree Species and Urban Forestry on Bird Habitat"; Ms. Bleier will circulate the paper to interested committee members.
- B. Yan Linhart acknowledged the January 8, 2017 failure of the historic Pioneer Cabin Tree in Calaveras Big Trees State Park to the committee with the suggestion of a moment of silence.

3. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items: There were none.

4. Report from the City Council Liaison: Ms. Abelson was not present.

5. Action Items:

Motion to adopt the minutes from the December 12, 2016 meeting: Bleier; 2nd Srago; adopted unanimously with a correction to the reported roll call. Abstentions: Hrubes, Torrusio.

6. Report from the City Arborist:

Prée updated the Committee with a.) A progress report of contractor pruning work on City trees located on San Pablo Avenue and on selected Chinese Elm street trees. b.) The ongoing work to address trees that are encroaching across property lines into, or from the public right of way (PROW).

- The Committee inquired with Prée regarding clearance requirements: he responded that while the Municipal Code 13.28.040, 050 and 070 allow the City to require pruning of privately owned trees and shrubs to remove obstructions to the PROW, specific clearance distance guidelines are situationally variable. In practice, the City trees are pruned to maintain ≥ 4 feet from vertical walls and ≥ 8 feet from building roofs.

7. Presentation of the 2017 Tree Committee Work Plan to City Council:

Chair Boniello presented a draft of the Council presentation and solicited feedback for edits. The Committee made several suggestions including adding statistics on vacant City tree sites,

the overall health of the City trees, hazards, drought damages, dedicated budget and benefits of a healthy well-maintained urban forest in El Cerrito. The Committee concluded that an effective presentation would include sufficient explanation of program deficiencies.

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

- A. CalFire Urban and Community Forestry Grant 2016/17: Prée reported on the efforts he and a consultant had made to try to meet the \$150K budget requirements of the grant; that even with an ordinance revision, public meetings, planting over 150 trees, land cover mapping, fact sheets, GIS reporting and other deliverables, the total projected budget was \$108K. He and the consultant concluded that this grant may be designed for larger cities and noted the grant requirement for measurable Greenhouse Gas Emission reductions and the activities proximity to Disadvantaged Communities. The City made the decision not to pursue this grant at this time.
- B. Centennial Activities: Mike Srago reported that he had not received enough ideas from the Committee to make a recommendation or conclusion. He asked for the Committee to send more ideas. Price said he would send locations mapped with Google earth.

9. Old/New Business – none

10. Future agenda items:

- Centennial activities
- Educational outreach activities
- El Cerrito Arbor Week planning

11. Adjournment- 9:10