



Public Works Department

# MINUTES

## REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

**Monday December 11, 2017 7:00 p.m.**

**El Cerrito City Hall**

Hillside Conference Room

10890 San Pablo Avenue

### 1. Roll Call :

**Present:** Chair Steve Price, Members, Cathy Bleier, Yan Linhart, Mike Srago, Mary Torrusio. Also present; Staff Liaison, Stephen Prée.

**Absent:** Robert Hrubes, Also absent: City Council Liaison, Paul Fadelli

### 2. Committee Member Announcements:

- A. Mike Srago reported that he attended the California Forest Pest Council annual meeting: *Tree Mortality in Urban and Rural Communities* and shared some highlights including i.) Rapid tree decline, mortality, and failure is preventing any lumber salvage and it amounts to an average on one tree per week falling across roads in Kings Canyon and Yosemite National Parks alone. ii.) Shot Hole Borer species that attack forest, riparian and urban trees have moved as far north as Tehama County. iii.) Srago gave Poster Abstracts to Prée for distribution to the UFC.
- B. Cathy Bleier reported that a large number of people attended the City of El Cerrito Parks and Facilities Master Plan public meeting on Saturday November 18 including UFC members Hrubes, and Srago , where there was great support for natural areas and 'green information' and the public recognized that the City needs to enhance the management of these natural areas.

3. **Comments from the Public on non-agenda items:** Howdy Goudy said he was attending the meeting unofficially on behalf of the Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) to further new efforts of collaboration between the UFC, EQC, and Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC). Yan Linhart reported that he had attended the November PRC meeting in order to extend an invitation to collaborate with the UFC. Price, Bleier and Srago recommended that Prée send UFC meeting agendas to the Chair of each of these committees.

4. **Report from the City Council Liaison.** Mr. Fadelli was not present.

### 5. Action Items-

- A. A motion to adopt the minutes from the November 13, 2017 meeting as amended by Mike Srago: 2<sup>nd</sup>, Cathy Bleier; adopted unanimously.
- B. A motion to make payment for a Centennial Tree Plaque , with funds designated by the City for UFC use, was made by Cathy Bleier; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Mike Srago; passed unanimously.

**6. Report from the City Arborist:** Stephen Prée reported on a.) recent City tree pruning activities and requests; approximately 80 Chinese Elm trees were pruned this fall based on a strategy of pruning more frequently the larger, more failure prone City tree species . Certain streets with higher populations of large trees were also pruned with the ‘grid pruning” approach. BART requested the removal of two large Monterey Pine trees in Centennial Park and the clearance pruning of three other trees beneath the overhead structure. B.) the upcoming planting of 18 or more street trees.

**7. Tree Committee Activities, Calendar and Work Plan Update :**

- A. Approved City Tree List- Prée reported that with the draft tree list now properly formatted, he is making final edits before submitting it for City approval. Cathy Bleier commented that a good tree list is reviewed often, not to overwork it.
  
- B. Education and Outreach Planning- Cathy Bleier distributed notes from earlier ad-hoc subcommittee meetings and led a discussion on their recommendations. Mary Torrusio recommended that any content on the website should be available to the public including the Master Tree List and that recruitment of new UFC members should be the committee’s highest priority. Ms. Bleier led a tour of the City website related to the Urban Forest Committee and other tree related pages and she recommended adding values and benefits (2013 Davey i-Tree Analysis). The Committee determined that several pages and links need work including the tree planting, tree care, tree removal policies and procedures, and the tree trimming map. Steve Price observed that parts of the website are image deficient and visually uninviting; he recommended securing a DropBox for the UFC to draw content from. The UFC agreed to review the City website and to submit suggestions during the next UFC meeting.

**8. Old/New Business –none**

- Develop discussion topics for the upcoming PG&E guest speaker
- Arbor Week
- Website content
- City Street Tree Planting Opportunities
- Tree Pruning Principals Review

**Adjournment- 9:00**