



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE

Monday March 12, 2018 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

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

2. Committee Member Announcements: Mike Srago initiated a brief discussion on Oak Wilt disease.

3. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items: Mark Mendell introduced himself.

4. Report from the City Council Liaison: Ms. Pardue-Okimoto was not in attendance.

6. Action Items- A motion to adopt the minutes from the March 12, 2018 meeting was made by Mike Srago, 2nd, Cathy Bleier; adopted unanimously.

7. Report from the City Arborist- Stephen Prée provided a brief update on street tree planting projects; an upcoming article in City News and Views regarding City street trees which he thanked Chair Price for contributing to; upcoming public meetings for the El Cerrito Parks and Facilities Master Plan on March 29 & May 23.

A discussion followed regarding potential volunteer tree planting efforts in El Cerrito and organizing grass-roots teams to work in urban forestry, similar to the City's Environmental Quality Committee Green Teams.

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

A. Update from Tree Planting Grants ad-hoc subcommittee –Robert Hrubes and Mike Srago reported that Ralph Boniello 's research indicated that the current grant opportunities are targeting green infrastructure projects and are less focused specifically on planting trees. New tree planting grant opportunities such as the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigations Program (EEMP) are opening this spring.

B. Arbor Week – Mary Torrusio reported that the March 7th planting event, in Cerrito Vista Park, was met with great enthusiasm by students; Mary, Robert Hrubes, Mike Srago, Mae Ritz of the El Cerrito Garden Club and Stephen Prée were there to facilitate the event. The Committee then discussed planning options for future Arbor Week events in collaboration with the Garden Club. Prée reported on the success of the Tree Circus

performance to the after school program students at Harding Elementary School. Steve Price suggested making Arbor Day a commemorative event. Yan Linhart said scouts and schools could be involved; event suggestions could be solicited in City newsletters. Mary volunteered to write an event article for posting on the City website.

- C. El Cerrito Earth Day Celebration- Prée described the April 21 work party he is organizing in Canyon Trail Park and invited the UFC to participate. Yan Linhart made a motion for the UFC to host the work party, 2nd Cathy Bleier, unanimous.
- D. Urban Forest Content on the City Website- Mary Torrusio recommended that the City perform an analysis of the top ten tree, and urban forest related searches of the City website. She suggested that more content related to tree care be posted on the website, including specific notes on what the City is doing to care for its trees, the City tree list and general tree care related links to outside websites. Yan Linhart suggested posting a list of remarkable trees in the City.

9. Old/New Business – Robert Hrubes and Cathy Bleier proposed that City Council Liaison reports be tapered to emphasize urban forest and environmental content.

10. Future agenda items

- Annual Election of Officers
- Earth Day Celebration Planning
- City Street Tree Planting Opportunities - Grants ad-hoc subcommittee
- Outreach- Website
- Tree Ordinance Revision

Adjournment- 9:05