



Staff Liaison
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MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
Urban Forest Committee

Monday July 13, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

VIA TELECONFERENCE

<https://elcerrito.webex.com/elcerrito/onstage/g.php?MTID=eea4b959267ab65297b13301242ccd57e>

Event ID: 146 483 0529

Event Password: XcZyWRAM325

Join by Phone: 1-408-418-9388

Access code: 146 4830529

CONVENE REGULAR MEETING: Chair Torrusio called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL– Present: Chair Mary Torrusio, Vice Chair Robert Hrubes Members Cathy Bleier, Yan Linhart, Robin Mitchell.
Also present: Council Liaison Janet Abelson,
Staff Liaison Stephen Prée

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – there were none.

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS / CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA – there were none.

4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS –

Council Liaison Abelson reported that due to the Covid-19 public health order, City Hall is open by appointment only and many City activities have been impacted. Ms. Abelson also relayed the severity of the current City budget deficit and some of the Actions taken by the City thus far including staff furloughs, resulting in 10% pay cuts, a City-wide hiring freeze, increased staff contributions to CalPERS as well as some part time employee lay-offs. She invited everyone to participate in the Budget Town Hall Meeting on August 1, the City Council meeting August 18 and the Special Study Session on September 1.

Staff liaison Prée relayed additional details regarding the City's Covid -19 response as well as new budget reductions to programming, and City services including reassigning Public Works staff to perform previously contracted landscape maintenance work, and the additional responsibility assigned to his position of managing the City's Clean Water Program.

Discussion: Upcoming potential effects of budget cuts to El Cerrito's urban forest program & the Tree City USA designation.

5. ACTION ITEMS –

- Approval of the Minutes from the March 9, 2020 meeting: Motion, Mitchell; 2nd: Bleier; unanimous (roll call vote).
- Annual election of officers - Nominate and elect Chair and Vice Chair of the UFC for an annual term July 2020 through April 2021:
 - a) Chair Nomination of Mary Torrusio: Mitchell; nominations closed: Bleier; approved unanimously (roll call vote).
 - b) Vice Chair Nomination of Robert Hrubes: Bleier; nominations closed: Linhart; approved unanimously.

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

- A. UFC and community wildfire prevention- Discussion: Measure H funds designated for HNA fire fuel reduction and vegetation management projects, Prée is project manager, potential \$70K budget. UFC offered to review project scope.
Mitchell shared information on prescribed burning and the potential of the City hosting educational webinars. Discussion: the role of the UFC with wildfire prevention; education; more robust web presence to share information; guest speakers; project grant opportunities; prioritizing fuel reduction projects and potential ad-hoc subcommittee review.
- B. Urban forestry outreach and education – Discussion : Street tree planting, development of tree care corps to augment City's street tree planting; increased web presence; speakers series; outreach to local schools; all dependent upon the lifting of public health restrictions; the value, role and resilience of City Boards, Committees and Commissions; development of non-profit volunteer tree advocacy & action team.

7. NEXT MONTH'S CITY COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE ASSIGNMENTS

- Robin Mitchell will attend the EQC meeting August 11
- Yan Linhart will try to attend the PRC meeting August 26

8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- 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