



PUBLIC WORKS

Staff Liaison

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MINUTES

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
Environmental Quality Committee**

Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

VIA TELECONFERENCE

<https://elcerrito.webex.com/elcerrito/onstage/g.php?MTID=ecc5ce869a63a4091408b689621a44dbf>

7:00 p.m. CONVENE REGULAR MEETING – Chair Tsutsui called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Neil Tsutsui; Vice-Chair Beth Molnar; Members Howdy Goudey, Rebecca Milliken, Mark Miner, Sean O’Conner, Paloma Pavel, Jeff Sobul, Renee Solari, Ellen Spitalnik, Sheila Tarbet, and Dave Weinstein

Absent: None

Also Present: Will Provost, Staff Liaison; Laureteen Brazil, City of El Cerrito Waste Prevention Specialist

2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

El Cerrito resident Chris Lynch confirmed that this is the 3rd EQC meeting that he’s attended and reiterated his interest in serving on the EQC. Rose Vekony announced that she is interested in serving on the EQC. Buddy Akacić noted his interest in serving on the EQC and reported on a potential traffic hazard relating to the new rain gardens on San Pablo Avenue at Moeser Lane. Robin Mitchell, member of the City’s Urban Forest Committee (UFC), stated that the UFC is looking forward to future collaborations with the EQC and it was mentioned that there’s a new Instagram page being run by residents to promote El Cerrito’s Urban Forest titled “El Cerrito Trees”.

3. COUNCIL/STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS

Staff Liaison Will Provost provided an update on the new rain garden project under construction on San Pablo Avenue at Moeser Lane. He explained that the City’s budget challenges continue and highlighted that the City may have to make more cuts to further reduce expenses. Provost also noted that two new council members are now seated.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Consider a motion adopting the minutes of the EQC meeting on December 8, 2020.

Moved/Second: Members Tsutsui/Solari **Action:** Passed a motion to adopt the minutes of the December 8, 2020 EQC meeting **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None **Abstentions:** Miner

5. EQC MEMBER APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Committee members discussed the application and appointment process for parties interested in serving on the EQC. It was discussed that Chris Lynch has

submitted an application and attended 3 meetings and Buddy Akacić has submitted an application and attended two meetings.

Two members of the EQC volunteered to interview Chris Lynch and Buddy Akacić prior to the next meeting and will report back to the full committee before the group makes a formal recommendation to the El Cerrito City Council for appointment.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND RACIAL FRAMEWORK

There was a robust discussion beginning with a presentation from the EQC's Ad-hoc Sub-committee. Members discussed potential next steps, including coordination with the Human Relations Commission, goals for the EQC, training, data tools, and possible partnerships.

7. EQC BUDGET AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Committee participated in discussion and considered activities that can take place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Educational Events, Films, and Workshops
- Green Team Cleanups / Broom Pulls.
 - Weinstein provided an update on the dates for planned events:
 - Cerrito Creek (Feb 20)
 - April 24, Saturday. Earth Day or Earth Month. TBD.
 - Baxter Creek Cleanup (June 6)
 - Cerrito Creek (Aug 15)
 - Coastal Cleanup Event (Sept) – TBD
 - Northern Entryways (Oct 16)
 - Baxter Gateway Cleanup (Dec 5)
- Fix-it Clinic(s)
- Drive Clean Bay Area Event – January 20
- Earth Day 2021 – (April 24)
 - The Committee discussed options for the Earth Day event including potential online talks, films, or self-guided cleanups.
- 8th Annual Hillside Festival – May 2021?
- EV 101 Workshop, Dec. 9 – Debrief
- BayREN Workshop, Dec. 9 – Debrief

Consider a motion that the EQC sponsor the 2021 El Cerrito Hillside Festival with no financial support from the EQC.

Moved/Second: Members Weinstein/Milliken **Action:** Passed a motion to approve that the EQC sponsor the 2021 Hillside Festival. **Ayes:** Unanimous **Noes:** None **Abstentions:** None

8. CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

There was a discussion about the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and the EQC recommendations for the Specific Plan Update and Environmental Impact Review. The Committee also discussed the City Council's Ad-Hoc Sub-committee on Climate, and how the City should proceed after declaring a climate emergency.

9. PLASTIC REDUCTION EFFORTS AND FOOD WARE ORDINANCE


Provost provided a brief update on the anticipated timeline for the City's proposed Expanded Food Ware Ordinance.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Weinstein, O'Conner, Milliken, Molnar, and Provost made comments and/or provided additional updates.

- Urban Forest Committee Collaboration
- Recycling Update and EQC Support of Program Implementation
- Committee Education/Training on Equity and Environmental Justice
- Briefing from the Fire Department / How can the EQC help with preparedness?
- Climate Adaptation, Severe Weather Events, and Emergency Preparedness
- PG&E Emergency Power Shutoffs
- Collaboration with the Urban Forest Committee
- EQC Collaboration with Young People in El Cerrito
- Tool/Toy Lending Library
- City Support for Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR 763)
- Urban Greening Plan Implementation
- Community Member Suggestions (e.g. Meatless Green Mondays, Leaf Blowers)
- Real Property Transfer Tax Rebates for Energy Efficiency – Education
- EQC Skills/Resource List

11. ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.



Neil Tsutsui, Chair

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Environmental Quality Committee meeting of **January 12, 2021** as approved by the Environmental Quality Committee.



Will Provost, Staff Liaison