



**Staff Liaison**  
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**MINUTES**  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
**Urban Forest Committee**

**Monday January 11, 2021 7:00 p.m.**  
VIA TELECONFERENCE

<https://elcerrito.webex.com/elcerrito/onstage/g.php?MTID=e89e779bba35df998289efc5c371faad8>

**Event ID:** 146 415 7675

**Event Password:** JoinECUFC

**Join by Phone:** 1-408-418-9388

**Access code:** 146 415 7675

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**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: Staff Liaison Stephen Prée, members of the public Jennifer Kaczor, Julia Conant.

Absent: Councilmember Abelson

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:** Jennifer Kaczor and Julia Conant introduced themselves as interested applicants to the UFC.

**3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS / CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA**

Robin Mitchell recommended a book she is reading “American Canopy, a history of forests and trees in America”.

Yan Linhart thanked Chair Torrusio for her work creating an Instagram account for #ElCerritoTrees.

Vice Chair Hrubes inquired with the Committee regarding generating their support for an expansion of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification credential to include urban forestry. Discussion of how the standard would be applied and details of the program. Prée requested that Hrubes provide an orientation and outline presentation on the FSC to the UFC in a future meeting.

Cathy Bleier informed the Committee of a local fire council project to match 12–18-year-old volunteers (with a parent) to fire fuel reduction projects. Prée said that he would investigate further on behalf of the City.

**4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS-**

Prée reported: that former Assistant Director of East Bay Regional Parks, Jerry Kent has agreed to give a presentation to the UFC on February 8. A discussion regarding the focus of Mr. Kent’s presentation followed.

Cathy Bleier asked Prée what sanctions the City had imposed on the business owner who had contracted unauthorized pruning of City trees. Prée said that he is working to

draft a letter for the City attorney's review.

Discussion: who is responsible, business owner or contractor? The UFC is willing to help the City inform business owners and residents of the City's public tree pruning, planting and removal requirements. Bleier and Michell offered to help draft letter and create ad-hoc subcommittee if needed.

## **5. ACTION ITEMS-**

- Consider a motion to adopt minutes from the December 14, 2020 meeting. Motion, Hrubes; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Bleier. Approved unanimously.
- Consider a motion to recommend to Council the reappointment of Robin Mitchell to the UFC. Motion, Hrubes; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Linhart. Approved unanimously.

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

- A. Cool Trees- Chair Torrusio described her creation of an Instagram account called #ElCerrito Trees and suggested it could be a tool for Arbor Day promotions as well as a vehicle for education; she said that anyone can submit photos to the account. Discussion: Hrubes asked that the name be changed to include "Trees of the El Cerrito Urban Forest"; Prée asked how the account content would be juried.
- B. Arbor Week 2021 March 7-14. Prée described the Tree City USA qualifying requirements including an Arbor Day proclamation and celebration that would require some innovation this year in consideration of the Covid -19 restrictions. Discussion: Mitchell, film showing; Torrusio, Photo 24 street trees and post; Mitchell, report in Green Happenings on street tree plantings, etc.; Julia Conant volunteered to photograph and post the street tree planting by the City at her home. All agreed to return next month with additional suggestions.
- C. UFC Workplan- brief discussion included reference to the EQC process- deferred to April or May.
- D. UFC Recruitment Letter- Prée will send Cathy's outreach letter to UFC.

## **7. NEXT MONTH'S CITY COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE ASSIGNMENTS**

- EQC meeting – January 12: Mitchell
- PRC meeting –January 27: Torrusio

## **8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Jerry Kent presentation
- Arbor Week March 7-14
- Forest Sustainability Council- presentation Vice Chair Hrubes
- Work Plan
- UFC Recruitment

- Friends of the El Cerrito Urban Forest

**9. ADJOURNMENT-** Chair Torrusio adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

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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 January 11, 2021 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

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Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison