



Public Works Department

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TREE COMMITTEE

Monday February 13, 2017 7:00 p.m.
El Cerrito City Hall
Hillside Conference Room
10890 San Pablo Avenue

1. Roll Call :

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

2. Committee Member Announcements: There were none.

3. Comments from the Public on non-agenda items: There were none.

4. Report from the City Council Liaison: Mr. Fadelli introduced himself to the Committee, and provided some of his professional background. He complimented the Tree Committee on the January 17 Work Plan presentation to Council. The Councilman gave the Committee highlights of upcoming City Council meeting topics including a review of the City's Strategic Plan, work on the 2017/18 budget, discussion of a potential Sanctuary City status, and he reported that the City received 48 applications for City Boards, Committees and Commissions.

5. Action Items:

Motion to adopt the minutes from the January 17, 2017 meeting with a revision to Item 8.A: Hrubes; 2nd Price; adopted unanimously.

6. Report from the City Arborist:

Prée updated the Committee with the following a.) Recent weather related emergency tree work at various locations and tree felling work in the Hillside Natural Area b.) He hosted volunteer work to remove Algerian Ivy from trees in Canyon Trail Park.

- The Committee inquired with Prée regarding the City tree budget; whether it is a common budget for routine street tree work, emergency tree work and planting new trees. Prée said the current tree budget is a single budget derived from two funding sources with a budget for a separate designated project for certain Hillside Natural Area trees. Ms. Bleier requested more budget information for a future meeting, she said that the City should be planting at least as many trees as it is removing and inquired if the City Tree Inventory is up to date. Prée said that the City maintains two inventories, one of which is updated by the city's tree contractor as work is performed.

7. Update on the 2017 Tree Committee Work Plan to City Council:

Chair Boniello said that he adopted many of the changes to the presentation that the Tree Committee suggested at the January meeting; tree program deficiencies were communicated as well as the program benefits and successes. He said that the presentation went well and he noted that Mr. Hrubes and Mr. Linhart were also present. Councilman Fadelli said that during the Council meeting, Councilman Lyman commented that the Tree Committee work plan presentation was “exactly the kind of report we want to have”.

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

A. **Centennial Activities Planning:** The Committee discussed several ideas including a large stature centennial tree that would be alive and well for celebration of the City’s bi-centennial (Price); planting 100 trees throughout the City (Boniello); planting locations should be principally civic (Hrubes); the designation of an official City tree species. After Mr. Price circulated a book: Urban Forests: A Natural History of Trees and People in the American Cityscape by Jill Jones a discussion ensued regarding increasing Tree Committee collaboration with the City Parks and Recreation Commission and the Environmental Quality Committee and changing the name from the City Tree Committee to the Urban Forest Committee; “urban forest” connotes more of an ecosystem approach to City trees.

B. **Educational Outreach Activities:** A discussion of outreach goals and objectives considered the target audiences, purpose and type of outreach including tree pruning workshop(s), tree planting, Committee web presence, Community Corps (tied in with City Parks and Recreation and Environmental Quality Committees), tabling materials for City events, FAQs. Ms. Bleier made a cautionary note regarding mission creep and keeping-up with current work plan goals. An ad-hoc committee was formed by members Bleier, Torrusio and Linhart.

9. Old/New Business – Mr. Boniello encouraged the Committee to pursue involvement with the El Cerrito Hillside Natural Area.

10. Future agenda items:

- Centennial activities
- Educational outreach
- Earth Day projects
- Name change
- Hillside Natural Area

11. Adjournment- 9:10