



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

**Monday March 8, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**  
**VIA TELECONFERENCE**

<https://elcerrito.webex.com/elcerrito/onstage/g.php?MTID=ec8486f17f4f04e321eeab2b892e50d4e>

**Event ID: 187 843 9020**

**Event Password: JoinECUFC**

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

**Access code: 187 843 9020**

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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, Members Cathy Bleier, Yan Linhart, Robin Mitchell.

Not present: Vice Chair Robert Hrubes

Also present: Mayor Pro Tem Gabriel Quinto, Staff Liaison Stephen Prée, members of the public: Sue and Paul Duncan, Jennifer Kaczor, Cassie Hughes.

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:** There were none.

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

Robin Mitchell suggested that the UFC consider co-sponsoring an Earth Day event with the EQC that would include a video presentation by naturalist Doug Tallamy. She requested that Earth Day be added to the April UFC meeting agenda.

Chair Torrusio noted that the UFC meeting is not listed on the City Calendar.

Prée noted that Jennifer Kaczor has attended three UFC meetings and is now eligible for the UFC to recommend to City Council her appointment to this committee.

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

Mayor Pro Tem Quinto told the committee that he is very proud that El Cerrito is a Tree City USA and he congratulated Cathy Bleier on her reappointment to the UFC. Mr. Quinto reported on the state of the City budget: deficits are high as is the case with several other cities; he has been lobbying Congressman DeSaulnier with the East Bay Division of Cal Cities for federal funding relief which is expected to be approximately \$4 million. The City plans to use this money to pay debt and replenish emergency reserves. The City has already taken severe austerity measures with layoffs and furloughs.

Staff Liaison Prée, informed the UFC of the recent death of the Public Works Operations and Environmental Services Manager, Maria Sanders. Also, he provided an update on current street tree pruning and planting activities.

**5. Presentation-** Tree Board University: Prée shared this web page and summarized the program sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation and US Forest Service; he suggested that the UFC take this course. After some discussion, regarding the City's Urban Forest Management Plan, grant funding and UFC education & outreach, the UFC agreed to review "Tree Board University 101" and discuss at the April meeting for possible further action.

**6. ACTION ITEMS-**

- Consider a motion to adopt minutes from the February 8, 2021 meeting. Motion, Mitchell; 2<sup>nd</sup>, Bleier. Approved unanimously.

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

A. Arbor Week 2021 March 7-14. Robin Mitchel and Chair Torrusio reported that the "Ask the Arborist" event hosted by the El Cerrito Garden Club was a great success, and they thanked the Garden Club and Martha Jackson for their support.

Prée reported on a successful Arbor Day tree planting with school children from the Fairmont Elementary after school program and Fairmont School garden coordinator Claire Boudreaux.

B. Tree City USA sign locations- Yan Linhart reported that he and Vice chair Hrubes had several suggestions for locations including the City's north and south gateways, BART stations, the library, etc. They recommended procuring more of these signs. More discussion was planned for the next UFC meeting.

C. Unauthorized pruning or planting communication – deferred.

**8. NEXT MONTH'S CITY COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE ASSIGNMENTS**

- EQC meeting – March 9: Mitchell
- PRC meeting – March 23: Bleier

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Tree Board University
- Election of UFC officers
- Recommend to council the appointment of Jennifer Kaczor to the UFC
- Earth Day
- Forest Sustainability Council- presentation Vice Chair Hrubes
- Work Plan
- UFC Recruitment

- Friends of the El Cerrito Urban Forest

10. **ADJOURNMENT-** Chair Torrusio adjourned the meeting at 9:07 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 February 8, 2021 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

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Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison