MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
Urban Forest Committee
Monday December 12, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCE
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81126280008?pwd=cStqMXQrVTdPL0U5a0poNDRxc215QT09
Meeting ID: 811 2628 0008 Passcode: 911 276
or dial in 1-408-638-0968

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

1. ROLL CALL:
   Present: Chair Robin Mitchell, Vice Chair Cathy Bleier; members: Catherine (Cassie) Hughes, Robert Hrubes, Susan Kuchinskas, Jennifer Kaczor, Yan Linhart. Also present: Staff Liaison Stephen Prée; members of the public: Sue Duncan.

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

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS /CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA: Bleier informed the committee that she had responded to an inquiry by Sue Duncan related to the effective spacing of street trees for fire safety. Mitchell invited any parties interested in receiving various forwarded announcements related to trees, urban forestry, and sustainability to send her their email address. Hughes requested an addition to the meeting agenda of the topic of UFC Orientation.

4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS – Staff Liaison Prée conveyed that the State Covid-19 Emergency Order will be lifted at the end of February causing in-person meetings to resume in March for the UFC and other City boards, committees and commissions. He also reported on the decay diagnosis and subsequent removal of a large, 30" Monterey Cypress from Arlington Park.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES –
   A. Adopt the minutes from the November 14, 2022, UFC Meeting: Motion: Hrubes; 2nd: Kuchinskas; Ayes 7, Noes 0

   B. Adopt the annual UFC meeting calendar for 2023: Motion: Linhart; 2nd: Hrubes; Ayes: 7, Noes: 0.

6. COLLABORATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE – Chair Mitchell reported that a consultant had been selected for the Climate Action Plan Update and she requested that the UFC be included with plan development as urban forestry is a major component of climate action. Discussion: Hughes inquired how the
two committees would collaborate and suggested that the EQC invite interested UFC members to attend a meeting specific to the Climate Action Plan Update.

7. **COLLABORATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**- Kaczor reported, that no material relevant to the UFC was discussed other than the Arlington Park renovations. Ms. Kaczor suggested that this agenda item be discontinued as overlap between the UFC and PRC is limited; she could report in announcements as needed. **Discussion**: Hughes commented that even general information is informative, Mitchell and Hrubes agreed and requested that this item remain on future agendas.

8. **URBAN FOREST COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES, CALENDAR, AND WORK PLAN UPDATE**-

   A. **Arbor Day 2023**- Linhart and Kuchinskas presented the following potential Arbor Day project ideas:
      - create list of notable trees in El Cerrito
      - collaborate with Trail Trekkers for a tree walk with gathering afterwards
      - mini-forest initiative  
        **Discussion**: how to develop tree list; nominate trees and send to Prée. Mini Forest: Linhart will do more research and send article, Kuchinskas will try to secure a speaker on the topic. Prée to help develop Arbor Day tree planting ideas with school age children.

   B. **Tree City USA Growth Awards**- Bleier summarized requirements and will work with Prée to refine and submit the application.

   C. **El Cerrito Urban Forest Program Fundraising**- Kaczor, Mitchell, provided a document update, Prée will move document into City management review and report back.

   D. **Urban Forest Management Plan**- Mitchell led discussion on what remains to be done. Ad-hoc subcommittee will make recommendations and report back to full committee at future UFC meeting.

   E. **UF Grants**- Mitchell summarized current grant opportunities, said time is of the essence with significant amount of money currently earmarked. Hrubes suggested applying for a grant to update the Urban Forest Management Plan.

9. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS** –

   - Arbor Week March 7-14, 2023
   - Speaker on Pocket Forest
   - UFC Orientation Packet (Bleier, Hughes)
   - Fundraising (Hrubes, Kaczor, Mitchell)
• Urban Forest Management Plan (Hrubes, Linhart, Mitchell)
• Tree Inventory Demonstration
• Diversity and Inclusion (Hrubes, Mitchell)
• Richmond Trees /Tree Corps
• Education & Outreach (Hughes, Kuchinskas, Linhart)
• UF Grants (Hrubes, Kaczor, Mitchell)
• Coastal Conservancy Grant HNA Management Plan Updates
• Future Speakers

10. ITEMS FROM TONIGHT’S MEETING THAT REQUIRE FURTHER ACTION:

11. ADJOURNMENT- Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the regular Urban Forest Committee meeting of December 12, 2022, as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

Robin Mitchell, Chair or Cathy Bleier, Vice Chair

Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison