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, Jennifer Kaczor, Yan Linhart.
   Also present: Council Liaison Fadelli, Staff Liaison Stephen Prée; members of the public: Sue Duncan, Paul Duncan.

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

3. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS /CHANGES TO THE MEETING AGENDA: Chair Mitchell informed the UFC of an upcoming California Urban Forest Council webinar on Miyawaki Pocket Forests on March 16. Hughes requested that Earth Day be added to tonight’s meeting agenda.

4. COUNCIL / STAFF LIAISONS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS – Council Liaison Fadelli told the UFC that he had recognized El Cerrito Arbor Week and the City’s Tree City USA status from the dais in a recent City Council meeting; reported that the City has a healthy budget reserve that would be used in the event of disaster relief and may help with the purchase of a new fire truck. He announced the City’s intention to add a library bond to an upcoming election, the library would be part of the future BART Plaza development, providing for reduced construction costs compared with a stand-alone library building. Mr. Fadelli announced that donations are being solicited to help fund the City’s July 4 celebration. Staff Liaison Prée welcomed the UFC back to the first in-person meeting since March 2022; reported on recent routine tree pruning work; said he is completing the Coastal Conservancy grant work program document and helping ECFD with a Cal Fire grant application.

5. ACTION ITEMS
   Adopt the minutes from the February 13, 2023, UFC meeting. Motion: Kaczor; 2nd: Hrubes: Ayes:6; Noes: 0.
6. COLLABORATION WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE – Chair Mitchell reported that EQC Council Liaison Motoyama is exploring establishing more direct communication lines between advisory bodies and City Council; the EQC is investigating advisory body membership for people under 18 years old, and she announced the Earth Day event at the Community Center on April 15.

7. COLLABORATION WITH THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION- Kaczor reported that she will serve as the PRC representative to the Climate Action Plan advisory committee; the PRC is recommending that the City devote at least one full time City employee be designated to work on its parks, she hopes that the PRC and UFC will collaborate on making this recommendation to Council.

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

A. Arbor Day 2023 Activities: Prée said that the Tree Walk and tree planting events had been postponed due to the rainy weather. Bleier reported that she had approached the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) regarding collaborative environmental curriculum programing but WCCUSD is reluctant to engage with NGOs and environmental groups. Fadelli volunteered to talk about this with the WCCUSD liaison to the City.

B. Notable Trees List – the Committee discussed the loss of momentum for this project based on the resignation of its primary UFC advocate, Susan Kuchinskas. Topic was tabled.

C. Pocket Forests- Linhart gave a report and led a discussion on Miyawaki pocket forests; California Urban Forest Council will host webinar on this topic Thursday March 16. Mitchell recommended the book “Mini Forest Revolution”.

D. Urban Forest Management Plan- Bleier said the current (2007) Plan still has several notable goals that have not been met and the City tree inventory is currently being updated as part of the new City tree maintenance contract; considering the City’s lack of staff resources and the staff efforts being applied to grants, is this an appropriate time to pursue a UFMP update? Discussion: Mitchell said the Coastal Conservancy has multiple planning grants available. Similar plans (e.g. San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan) are used as blueprints for the City. The ad-hoc subcommittee had reviewed the current plan and found that it is out-of-date. Hrubes commented that the current UFMP is embarrassing and it needs to be updated. Bleier asked each UFC member to synthesize what needs to be changed in 3 or 4 bullet points. Prée commented that he has discussed the update with Public Works management who noted that an update is not in the current department work plan, he suggested that the UFC submit a memo that succinctly states the need for an updated UFMP. Hrubes volunteered to reread the 2007 Plan and to finalize his recommendations for an update.

E. UF Grants – Kaczor suggested this item be renamed to “Fundraising & Grants”
and inquired about the fundraising document that the UFC had submitted to Prée, who replied that the document required minor refinement before he could submit it to City Management, which he will make a priority.

F. Earth Day – Discussion: UFC will host an information table at the luncheon reception in the Community Center; Hrubes, Mitchell, and Linhart volunteered

G. Future speakers- deferred.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS –
   • El Cerrito Earth Day – April 15
   • Urban Forest Management Plan Update
   • Tree Fund (Hrubes, Kaczor, Mitchell)
   • Tree Inventory Demonstration
   • Diversity and Inclusion (Hrubes, Mitchell)
   • 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:
    UFC members for the UFMP - bring a succinct list of recommended updates

11. ADJOURNMENT- Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 9:07 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 March 13, 2023 as approved by the Urban Forest Committee.

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Robin Mitchell, Chair or Cathy Bleier, Vice Chair

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Stephen Prée, Staff Liaison