

LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

MEETING DATE: **July 9, 2019**

AGENDA ITEM #: **2**

CONSENT:
ACTION: **X**

REGULAR: **X**
INFORMATION:

WORK SESSION:

CLOSED SESSION:
(Confidential)

ITEM TITLE: BEE CITY Designation

KEY ELEMENTS:

☐ Economic Development ☐ Excellent Government ☒ Natural and Built Environment ☐ Safe Community ☒ Vibrant Community

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt a resolution to proclaim Lynchburg as a BEE CITY USA.

SUMMARY: The City's Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments partnering with Blue Ridge Conservation Coalition, Lynchburg Garden Club, Piedmont Beekeepers, Randolph College, Central Virginia Master Naturalists, and the Lynchburg Area Food Council (these partners now known as BEE CITY USA – Lynchburg, Virginia Committee) are supporting a resolution to designate Lynchburg, Virginia, a BEE CITY USA Affiliate. The purpose of the BEE CITY USA – Lynchburg, Virginia Committee is to galvanize several independent agencies toward the BEE CITY USA designation that will benefit a robust, sustainable food economy by prolonging the life of pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species by providing them with a healthy habitat.

Thanks to more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States, with 300 species native to Virginia, along with introduced honey bees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables. Bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides, parasites, diseases and climate change. Pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator –friendly plant materials from local growers.

Lynchburg, VA should be certified a BEE CITY USA community because the goals of BEE CITY USA are consistent with the City's focus on improving and sustaining the City's landscape and environment through the following efforts which collectively seek to protect our natural resources for the benefit of our community:

- The Department of Parks and Recreation in partnership with the City's Public Works Department has demonstrated a commitment to planting native plants and landscaping with wildlife and pollinators in mind throughout City property;
- There are a variety of established pollinator gardens throughout Lynchburg, including sites at: Riverside Park, Sandusky Park, Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, Miller Park, Old City Cemetery, and Riverfront Park;
- The Department of Parks and Recreation implementation of The Please Do Hug the Trees Campaign introducing many concepts that sustain pollinators including the Million Pollinator Challenge, Parks for Monarchs, numerous naturalist programs as well as a promise to eliminate the use of glyphosate in natural areas and children's play areas.
- The City has elected to participate in the Tree City USA program through the Arbor Day Foundation since 1983;
- The City has a history of supporting the local farmer, which is continued today with the operation of the Lynchburg Farmers' Market;
- There are numerous beekeepers in the City, as well as in the greater Lynchburg area.

PRIOR ACTION(S): None

FISCAL IMPACT: None

CONTACT(S): Andrew Reeder, Jennifer Jones, 455-5868

ATTACHMENT(S): Resolution Designating Lynchburg, Virginia, A Bee City USA Affiliate.

REVIEWED BY: bms

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RESOLUTION DESIGNATING LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA, A BEE CITY USA® AFFILIATE

WHEREAS, the mission of BEE CITY USA is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States with 300 species native to Virginia, along with introduced honey bees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides (including insecticides, fungicides and herbicides), parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat:

- Provides diverse and abundant nectar and pollen from plants blooming in succession throughout the growing season;
- Provides undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering for wild pollinators;
- Provides water for drinking, nest-building and butterfly puddling;
- Is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat;
- Is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted;
- Provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a long-term approach to maintaining healthy landscapes and facilities that minimizes risks to people and the environment by: identifying and removing the causes of pest problems rather than only attacking the symptoms (the pests); employing pests' natural enemies along with cultural, mechanical, and physical controls when prevention is not enough; and using pesticides only when no other method is feasible or effective; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters broad-based community engagement in environmental awareness and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Lynchburg, VA should be certified a BEE CITY USA community because the goals of BEE CITY USA are consistent with the City's focus on improving and sustaining the City's landscape and environment through the following efforts which collectively seek to protect our natural resources for the benefit of our community:

- The City's Department of Parks & Recreation in partnership with the City's Public Works Department has demonstrated a commitment to planting native plants and landscaping with wildlife and pollinators in mind throughout City property;
- There are a variety of established pollinator gardens throughout Lynchburg, including sites at: Riverside Park, Sandusky Park, Virginia Cooperative Extension Office, Miller Park, Old City Cemetery, and Riverfront Park;
- The City's Department of Parks and Recreation implementation of The Please Do Hug the Trees Campaign introducing many concepts that sustain pollinators including the Million Pollinator Challenge, Parks for Monarchs, numerous naturalist programs, as well as a ban on glyphosate in natural areas and children's play areas;

- The City has elected to participate in the Tree City USA program through the Arbor Day Foundation since 1983;
- The City has a history of supporting the local farmer, which is continued today with the operation of Lynchburg Farmers' Market;
- There are numerous beekeepers in the City, as well as in the greater Lynchburg area.

NOW THEREFORE, in order to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, the City of Lynchburg chooses to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement, resolving as follows:

1. The City of Lynchburg's Department of Parks & Recreation is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.
2. The Parks Services Specialist of the Department of Parks & Recreation is designated as the BEE CITY USA Liaison.
3. Facilitation of the City of Lynchburg BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the BEE CITY Working Committee.
4. The BEE CITY Working Committee is authorized to and shall:
 - a. **Celebration:** Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase the City of Lynchburg's commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
 - b. **Publicity & Information:** Install and maintain at least one authorized BEE CITY USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a webpage on the City of Lynchburg website which includes, at minimum:
 - i. a copy of this resolution and links to the national BEE CITY USA website;
 - ii. contact information for your BEE CITY USA Liaison and Committee;
 - iii. reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s) and
 - iv. a recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan (explained below).
 - c. **Habitat:** Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, which includes, but is not limited to, the following actions:
 - i. Identify and inventory City property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings
 - ii. Create a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species.
 - iii. Track (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
 - d. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** Create and adopt an integrated pest management (IPM) plan designed to prevent pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods.
 - e. **Policy:** Assure the environmental and recreational goals outlined in the *City of Lynchburg Comprehensive Plan 2013-2030* are in line with requirements of BEE CITY USA and,
 - f. **Plan Review:** Review the *City of Lynchburg Comprehensive Plan 2013-2030* and other relevant documents to consider improvements to pest management policies and practices as they relate to pollinator conservation, identify appropriate locations for pollinator-friendly plantings, and consider other appropriate measures.
 - g. **Renewal:** After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of the City of Lynchburg's BEE CITY USA designation following the format provided by BEE CITY USA, including a report of the previous year's BEE CITY USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on Lynchburg's population.

ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Lynchburg, Virginia, this 9th day of July, 2019.

Robin C. Green
Clerk of Council