



Legislation Text

File #: 14-0284, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Bee City USA Participation

PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is for the Board of Aldermen to consider participating in the Bee City USA program.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

CONTACT INFORMATION: Randy Dodd (919) 918-7326

INFORMATION: At their September meeting, the Environmental Advisory Board referred a resolution to the Board of Aldermen to consider participating in Bee City USA, a program that seeks to build a movement in support of pollinator species and habitats across America. Asheville became the inaugural Bee City USA community in June 2012, and Talent, Oregon, was designated the second community in August 2014. An affiliate of Bee City USA: extends the municipality's credibility to local grassroots pollinator conservation efforts, opens doors to widespread collaboration for establishing and maintaining healthy pollinator habitat within the municipality's boundaries, can support the local economy, and institutionalizes the commitment beyond any one elected official's or staff member's term of service. The intent of the program is to:

- Help ensure the survival of vital animal species crucial to a complex food web.
- Raise community awareness of how our food is grown and improve local food production through expanded pollination. More than 150 food crops in the United States depend on pollinators.
- Improve local plant nursery markets by increasing demand for native, pollinator friendly plants.
- Raise community awareness of the dangers of non-native invasive plants to the local ecosystem.
- Raise community awareness of more natural ways to deal with home and garden pest problems than toxic chemical pesticides.
- Raise community awareness of the local environment's seasonality as understanding grows about the pollinators' reliance on blooming plants and trees.
- Through raised awareness, increase micro and small business opportunities. Newly discovered pride in local food products, such as artisanal honey and other honey bee products, creates new business opportunities. Honey is absolutely unique to the nearby flowers from which the bees gather nectar. Its taste and color vary dramatically as a result. Furthermore, as the community of beekeepers grows, the market for beekeeping supplies grows.

The Environmental Advisory Board and Marty Hanks from Just Bees Apiary have agreed to support designation.

The resolution referred by the EAB and a draft resolution for the Board's consideration are included. The draft for the Board's consideration includes the text from the EAB resolution with some additional language included that further articulates activities in Carrboro that are congruent with designation as a Bee City.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: The Town's estimated cost for a sign is \$150-\$200, and the Town's cost for an event to recognize affiliation will depend on the details of the event. There will be a small staff impact with submitting the application and posting information on the Town website.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board consider the attached resolution, and if in support, provide any desired direction including the scope and details of a recognition event in June 2015.