



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0324, **Version:** 1

Resolution Designating Hampton, Virginia, as a Bee City USA® Affiliate

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

Hampton Parks, Recreation, and Leisure Services Department and the Hampton Clean City Commission seek to have the City of Hampton designated as a Bee City USA® affiliate. The board of the Hampton Clean City Commission approved this measure as a means to further its beautification, community improvement, and sustainability efforts.

Discussion:

On November 13 2018, a Hampton Clean City Commission Board Member proposed that the Hampton Clean City Commission work toward obtaining approval for the City of Hampton to become a Bee City USA® affiliate. This membership would provide a framework for educating the public regarding sustainable landscaping efforts, encouraging habitat for pollinators, and celebrating the achievements that result. On May 14, 2019, the Hampton Clean City Commission Board voted to approve the plan and to take the steps necessary for Hampton City Council to approve the resolution.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2019, a Bee City USA® steering committee comprised of representatives from various supporting organizations throughout the city, including the Colonial Beekeepers Association, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Hampton Master Gardeners, the Virginia Native Plant Society, Hampton University's Biology Department, and others have met to lay the groundwork for the educational activities and habitat implementation projects that would become part of the endeavor.

Educational displays and presentations about pollinators and their necessary habitat have been held at Countryside Gardens, the Buckroe Farmers Market, the Newport News Go Green Expo, and other locations.

Impact:

The City of Hampton would be the fourth Bee City USA® affiliate in Virginia, following Lynchburg, Scottsville, and Vienna. There are two Bee Campus USA® affiliates. This designation will serve as a rallying point for volunteers and organizations interested in beautification, community improvement, and habitat for pollinators and for educational efforts that support these areas. It may also encourage tourism of those who are interested in pollinator habitats and landscaping.

Recommendation:

Approve resolution.

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, 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:

1. Provides diverse and abundant nectar and pollen from plants blooming in succession throughout the growing season;
2. 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;
3. Provides water for drinking, nest-building, and butterfly puddling;
4. Is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat;
5. 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;
6. 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, the City of Hampton, Virginia should be certified a BEE CITY USA community because:

1. Maintaining habitat and forage for bees and other pollinators is essential to the sustainability of our local environment
2. Resources for bees include many flowering plants, thus enhancing the natural beauty of Hampton
3. Maintaining habitat conducive to bees and other pollinators will support local farm and garden efforts by increasing pollination of fruits and vegetables, as well as flowers

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HAMPTON, VIRGINIA:

1. The City of Hampton Parks, Recreation, & Leisure Services Department is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.
2. The Clean City Coordinator of the Hampton Parks, Recreation, & Leisure Services is designated as the BEE CITY USA Liaison.
3. Facilitation of the City of Hampton BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the Hampton Clean City Commission Beautification Committee.
4. The Beautification 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 Hampton's commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
 - b. Publicity & Information: Work with the appropriate city department to 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 Hampton's website which meets the minimum standards of a Bee City Affiliate.
 - c. Habitat: Develop and implement a program for proposal 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 of Hampton real 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.
 - iv. 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.
 - v. Policy: Work with the Community Development Department to establish, through the City of Hampton a policy in the Community Plan of the City of Hampton to acknowledge and commit to the BEE CITY USA designation.
 - vi. Plan Review: Assist the Community Development Department in reviewing the Community Plan and other relevant documents as it relates 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.

Additional Requirements: After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of the City of Hampton'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 the City of Hampton's population.