



MEMO

To: Joseph A. Melder, City Manager
From: Gordon Denney, Senior Director, Park & Tree Department
Via: Gene Prevatt, Chief of Government Operations *Gene Prevatt*
Date: June 18, 2024
Subject: Bee City USA Membership Request and Resolution

The purpose of this memo is to seek permission for the City of Savannah to join Bee City USA and request approval of a draft resolution to be submitted with the application.

Last Summer we were approached by the Office of Sustainability to discuss the possibility of the City of Savannah partnering with Foster Beelief, an HBCU student led honeybee charity based in Savannah, to draft a resolution and move toward joining Bee City USA. As stated on their website, Bee City USA seeks “to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, in particular the more than 3,600 species of native bees in this country, by increasing the abundance of native plants, providing nest sites, and reducing the use of pesticides.”

We worked out the details of a resolution which meets both the needs of the City of Savannah and the intent of the Bee City USA mission. It is modeled after several other resolutions, specifically the Town of Apex, NC. We have also discussed efforts towards establishing a Savannah Pollinator Preservation Committee, as creation of a standing committee is part of the resolution. Such a committee would include a mix of volunteers and City of Savannah staff, with a chair or multiple co-chairs, managed by a non-profit organization.

Upon approval of a draft resolution, we will submit this document to Bee City USA for their review. If they agree to the terms as written, we will then move to have this resolution placed before City Council and proceed with joining the organization.

x

Approved, City Manager

Not Approved, City Manager

Comments: Bee-utiful!

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION of the City of Savannah
designating the City of Savannah, Georgia as 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 habitats, 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, 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, an ideal pollinator-friendly habitat (A) is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season to provide diverse and abundant nectar and pollen, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; (B) is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; (C) comprises undisturbed spaces (unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering; and (D) 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 Savannah should be certified a *BEE CITY USA* community because of several existing and planned initiatives to conserve pollinators, demonstrating the City of Savannah's dedication to creating a pollinator-friendly community and preserving the vital role that pollinators play in the local ecosystem, to include: establishing pollinator gardens in public spaces, practicing integrated pest management, conducting educational programs, promoting native plant use, collaborating with local bee organizations, developing pollinator-friendly landscaping guidelines, regulating beekeeping practices, undertaking habitat restoration projects, and working on pollinator-friendly city policies;

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 Savannah chooses to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement, resolving as follows:

1. The **City of Savannah** is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor.
2. The **City Manager or designee** shall serve as the BEE CITY USA Liaison.
3. Facilitation of the **City of Savannah's** BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the **Savannah Pollinator Preservation Committee**.
4. The **Savannah Pollinator Preservation 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 Savannah'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 the City of Savannah website which includes, at minimum a copy of this resolution and links to the national BEE CITY USA website; contact information for your BEE CITY USA Liaison and Committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s); and your 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, Identifying and inventorying the City of Savannah's real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings; creating a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species; and, tracking (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
- d. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** Review the City's current integrated pest management (IPM) plan and make recommendations regarding additional measures to address pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods.
- e. **Policy & Plans:** Review City of Savannah plans, policies, processes, and other relevant documents in relation to the preservation of pollinators, acknowledging and committing to the BEE CITY USA designation, and considering 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.
- f. **Renewal:** After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of the City of Savannah'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 Savannah's population.

ADOPTED by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah,

this ___ day of _____, 20__.

Van Johnson
Mayor

Approved as to form:

Attest:

Bates Lovett
City Attorney

Mark Massey
City Clerk

Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: 72ACA91F12A3412580D90DEFDE28260A	Status: Completed
Subject: Complete with DocuSign: 061824 Bee City USA Membership Request and Resolution.pdf	
Source Envelope:	
Document Pages: 3	Signatures: 1
Certificate Pages: 5	Initials: 0
AutoNav: Enabled	Envelope Originator:
Enveloped Stamping: Enabled	Renee Higgins
Time Zone: (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)	305 Fahm Street
	Savannah, GA 31401
	Renee.Higgins@Savannahga.Gov
	IP Address: 198.217.18.5

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GPrevatt@Savannahga.Gov		Viewed: 6/21/2024 2:21:23 PM
Chief, Government Operations		Signed: 6/24/2024 3:15:31 PM
City of Savannah		
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Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:
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Joseph A. Melder	Completed	Sent: 6/24/2024 3:15:33 PM
Jay.Melder@Savannahga.Gov		Viewed: 6/25/2024 2:08:49 PM
City Manager		Signed: 6/25/2024 2:10:15 PM
Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah		
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)	Using IP Address: 174.254.51.210	
	Signed using mobile	

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Midori Carpenter	COPIED	Sent: 6/25/2024 2:10:16 PM
Midori.Carpenter@Savannahga.Gov		
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Renee Higgins
renee.higgins@savannahga.gov
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Signing Complete	Security Checked	6/25/2024 2:10:15 PM
Completed	Security Checked	6/25/2024 2:10:16 PM

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