

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Frank Rogers, County Administrator FJR

FROM: Nina Rezai, Economic Development Director  
Jordan Welborn, Director Department of Community Engagement and Quality of Life

SUBJECT: Bee City Community Resolution

DATE: September 6, 2023

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### BACKGROUND:

Bees are responsible for nearly 75% of the pollination of the world's flowering plants and nearly 35% of the world's food crops according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). While bees are not classified as an endangered species in the United States, they have experienced a steep decline since 2010 due to large scale changes in land use and the disruption of the food supply they need to survive.

In 2014 the Bee City USA organization formed to act locally about a global issue. The Bee City USA organization provides a framework for communities to come together to conserve native pollinators by providing them with healthy habitats. The organization is an initiative of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. The organization requires affiliate localities to identify a committee to oversee compliance, dedicate public areas to pollinator plantings, and offer educational programming to the community on the importance of pollinators.

### DISCUSSION:

Upon review of the program, staff identified that many of the requirements to be recognized as a Bee City Community are already underway in Campbell County and would like to submit an application to become an affiliate locality of the Bee City Community organization. The Campbell County Public Library system offers regular programming to educate and encourage the support of bee habitats. The Department of Public works has incorporated native pollinator plantings in the complex landscaping. The Virginia Cooperative Extension- Campbell County office provides resources and training to residents who want to have their own hives. Campbell County has many residents represented in the Piedmont Beekeepers Association who provide support to local hive maintenance. With so much existing synergy around the protection and preservation of our bee species in Campbell County, the Department of Economic Development and Community Engagement and Quality of life determined that applying for the Bee City Community designation would enable all of the segments of bee preservation to be united.

Upon acceptance, Campbell County will join 193 other Bee City USA affiliates represented in 46 states of the United States. In our immediate surrounding localities, the City of Lynchburg and the Randolph College are the only other neighbors to also have this designation. Once secured,

you will begin to see pollinator planting signs and Bee City Community signage at entry to Campbell County.

The application includes the recommended slate for the committee to manage the designation:

- Department of Parks and Recreation representative- Mackenzie Dodds
- Campbell County Schools representative – FFA or horticulture educator
- Virginia Cooperative Extension- Todd Scott
- Piedmont Bee Keepers Association representative-
- Campbell County Community Member
- Campbell County Community Member

The committee will be open to all interested in supporting this initiative. Economic Development will account for the cost of membership in the organization from the tourism budget and it will be a planned allocation until a time when the Committee may secured sponsorship to continue the membership.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approving the attached resolution and authorize staff to proceed with an application to become a Bee City USA locality.