

WOODLAND

It's official: Woodland is now the 'City of Bees'

By Jim Smith

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When people set their minds to it, they can be as busy as bees.

And that's what happened on Wednesday, when less than 24 hours after the Woodland City Council applied to become a "Bee City," the members of "Bee City USA" accepted the request.

"Congratulations! Bee City USA is pleased to advise you that we received your signed resolution adopted January 15, 2019, and your final application, and have concluded that your community has met the standards for certification as the 79th Bee City USA affiliate in the nation," according to a statement sent to the city by Phyllis Stiles of the group.

Stiles continues on, re-

porting that Woodland and other "Bee City" affiliates will be listed at <http://www.beecityusa.org/current-bee-cities.html>.

On Tuesday night, the council voted unanimously to spend \$400 from the city's Community Development Department to apply for membership to the nonprofit organization, which was formed to boost awareness of and improve the habitat of local pollinators.

"Bee City USA promotes ongoing dialogue in urban areas to raise awareness of the role pollinators play in this community and what can be done to provide them with a healthy habitat," according to a report prepared by Assistant City Manager Ken Hiatt, who has been directly involved with Woodland's annual Honey Festival.

"Their mission is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of three-quarters of the world's plant species, by providing them a healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and low levels of pesticides," according to Hiatt. "With the rich agricultural production in and around Woodland, bees are an essential element of the pollination process and used extensively in facilitating pollination of many agricultural crops and wildflowers throughout Yolo County."

Woodland's economy is largely dependent on its diverse agriculture-based industry including pollination service companies.

Woodland is also home to the California Honey Festival, an event pro-

duced annually in partnership with the California Honey Festival Board and Honey and Pollination Center at UC Davis to celebrate the honey bee and its many benefits.

Last year the Honey Festival drew around 30,000 people to downtown Woodland in May. This year's festival is scheduled for Saturday, May 4. A planning session has been set for 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 22, at Father Paddy's Irish Pub in downtown Woodland.

Becoming a member of Bee City USA will enable Woodland to participate in a nationwide effort to maintain and improve current pollinator habitats and populations, according to Hiatt. The program currently has 75 Bee cities, six of which are in California. They include Fort Bragg, Orland, Redding, San Fran-

cisco, Santa Barbara and Thousand Oaks.

The program would be sponsored by the city's Economic Development Program and overseen by a designated staff member that will serve as the "Bee City Liaison." A Bee Committee, comprised of community and staff members, will be set up to assist with the following tasks:

- Annually celebrate National Pollinator Week (third full week of June) or some other appropriate occasion with education events, pollinator habitat planting s or restoration, proclamations or promotions that showcase Woodland's commitment to enhancing pollinator health and habitat.

- Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat.

- Establish a policy in the General Plan or Climate Action Plan to acknowledge and commit to the Bee City USA designation.

- Review the city's pest management policies and/or practices as they relate to pollinator conservation, identify appropriate locations for pollinator-friendly plantings, and consider other appropriate measures.

- 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 Woodland or Food Front website.

- Each January apply for renewal and include a report of the previous year's Bee City USA activities.

Contact reporter Jim Smith at 530-406-6230.