

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, In the United States, bee pollination of agricultural crops is said to account for about one-third of the U.S. diet, and to contribute to the production of a wide range of high-value fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, forage crops, some field crops, and other specialty crops according to the Congressional Research Service's report on Honey Bee Colony Collapse Disorder; and

WHEREAS, The monetary value of honey bees as commercial pollinators in the United States is estimated at about \$15 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, honey bees are recognized by the City of Austin's Grow Green program as playing an important role as pollinators in our local ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, the Wildlife Austin program encourages residents to provide habitat which is honeybee friendly; and

WHEREAS, In 2010 the US Department of Agriculture reported annual honey bee losses of 30-35% from 2007 - 2010 because of habitat loss, management stress, pesticides, parasites, illnesses and pathogens; and

WHEREAS, section 3-6-22 of our current code allows the health authority to destroy without notice or hearing:

(A) a colony not residing in a hive;

(B) a swarm of bees; or

(C) a colony residing in an abandoned standard or man-made hive; and

WHEREAS, Central Texas Bee Rescue will relocate said colonies or swarms captured live, which is recognized as a sustainable and environmentally conscious way of maintaining the honeybee population and the pollination that it provides; and

WHEREAS, Central Texas Bee Rescue will then use the colonies for educational programs which could include an adopt-a-hive program and reintroduce them back into the community; and; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to work with the Central Texas Bee Rescue and relevant City departments and community stakeholders to identify those elements in the City code of ordinances which may result in furthering the decline of honeybees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

The City Manager shall report back to the City Council within 45 days with any necessary code amendments which make removal and relocation the priority over the destruction of bee colonies and swarms while ensuring the public's health and safety.

ADOPTED: _____, 2011

ATTEST: _____

Shirley A. Gentry
City Clerk