

# *Grant County Beekeepers*

## **Meeting Notes**

**10 July 2019**

**In attendance:** 18 beekeepers and "friends of bees."

**Meeting start time:** 6:00 P.M.

### **General discussion and announcements:**

- Susan opened the meeting by introducing Silver City Mayor, Ken Ladner.
- Mayor Ladner spoke about the beekeeping NOI, and thanked us (Grant County Beekeepers), for working with Lynda Aiman-Smith to attempt to come up with an ordinance that will be acceptable to the town of Silver City, and to beekeepers. It should be noted that Ken Sexton has been working with Aiman-Smith towards this goal.
- The mayor opened the floor to general questions about what's happening in Silver City, and Silver City government. Questions and comments about the current recycling program were addressed. With the current recycling program, only corrugated cardboard is being accepted. Mayor Ladner said that when Tucson quit accepting recyclables other than cardboard, the town contracted with an El Paso firm to take all of our recyclables, except for glass. They were being paid thousands of dollars per month, only to find out that everything but cardboard was going into a landfill. Town government made the decision to save money, and send these materials to our own landfill. The town is seeking grant money to research, and find a creative use for plastic recyclables rather than burying it.
- Susan introduced local beekeepers Travis Kirkland, and Bill Overholt, and said that they would be presenting a show and tell on how to setup a swarm trap. Travis showed the equipment needed for the trap:
  - Heavily used deep brood box (for good bee odors!)
    - Painting the deep brood box yellow will help attract bees.
  - Frames & foundation with old dark comb
  - Old bottom board, inner top cover, and top cover
  - A swarm lure - Travis recommends the product Swam Commander as it is the only one that has worked for him.
  - Have a "ready to go" hive for when you do capture a swarm. Bees will have to be transferred fairly quickly.
    - To keep bees from swarming again, he suggested putting a queen excluder between the bottom board, and the first brood box. The bees are less likely to swarm again if the queen can't leave the hive (Africanized bees are more likely to abscond).
  - Trap placement:
    - At least two to three feet off the ground facing east.
    - Nailing the hive to a tree is another option.
  - Sequence of events:
    - Build trap

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- Setup & place trap
- Keep an eye out for activity. Pass by often to check on the trap because a swarm may occupy it quickly.
- When there is a lot of activity, close the trap entrance (gate - round slotted disk to keep bees in while providing ventilation).
- Move bees into the new hive
  - Locate & kill the queen
  - Introduce new queen into the hive in queen cage.
- Replace a successful trap immediately. A new swarm might quickly reoccupy.
- Travis said that he has been most successful trapping swarms in April & May.
  - Travis stated that all feral bees in this part of the country are at least partially Africanized. Requeening with a European queen will completely change the genetics of the hive within about six weeks, eliminating African traits.
- Susan discussed the origins of Africanized bees. She explained that a science experiment was performed in Brazil to hybridize African, and European bees in an attempt to create a hardier honeybee. The researchers were hoping to get the higher productivity of the African bees while keeping the gentle qualities of the European bees. The experiment failed in producing a gentle hybrid, and some African queen honeybees escaped into the wild.
- Susan asked Ken to speak on the subject of the town's NOI to regulate beekeeping within town limits.
- Ken explained that currently, the animal control officer will determine if a bee colony is a danger to public safety, or not. No training has been provided to Silver City Animal Control, so it is feared that this decision will be made with inadequate knowledge of honeybee behavior. The current animal control officer will likely attend some of our mentoring sessions to better understand the behaviour of honeybees. This is a good start, but there is no guarantee that the current animal control officer will stay in that position, and that we could get a new officer without training.
  - For the town ordinance, Lynda Aiman-Smith would like for Grant County Beekeepers (GCB) to come up with a list of "best beekeeping practices." Mayor Ladner would prefer that we suggest some beekeeping books to be used as references instead of providing a list. Since entire books have been written on best practices of beekeeping, a list will be inadequate. As a group, GCB must decide if we want to contribute to a best practices list, or not.
  - GCB has also been asked to write an affirmation statement to be used in the ordinance. A registered beekeeper within town limits would be required to sign the statement that would contain language affirming that he/she would comply with the best management practices in keeping bees. Again, GCB must decide if they want to contribute to this request or not.

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- From further discussion of the NOI, it appeared that most GCB members favored writing the affirmation statement, but were reluctant to contribute to the list of best beekeeping practices.
- Other statements/information concerning the beekeeper NOI are as follows:
  - Registered beekeepers names will not be made available to the public.
  - NOI is not needed because the incidence of bee attacks is very low. Risk to citizens is slight, especially compared to many other risks we face daily.
  - Ken will meet with Lynda Aiman-Smith again prior to any vote on the NOI.
  - We will need to see the final version of the NOI well in advance of the town council vote so that GCB can decide whether or not to support it.
  - Susan asked that we still email our town councilors about the NOI, and copy Mayor Ladner.

**Note: The Town Council vote on the NOI has now been moved to the August meeting, so won't be on the docket for the July 23rd meeting.**

- Susan stated that some members had suggested moving our meetings to a different location. There are two being considered where we wouldn't be charged to hold our meetings. Glenn Ouzts suggested the Methodist Church on College Ave., and Ken said that we could also use the meeting room in the Federal Bank building on N. Hudson St. Both places have restrooms, and are air conditioned. An announcement will be made prior to our next meeting concerning the selected location. Susan stressed that we should continue to "pass the hat" so that we can have petty cash funds for future GCB expenses.
- Donations were collected to pay for the Commons meeting room.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

**Next meeting- August 14th, at 6:00 P.M. (**

Beekeeper Meeting Location: To be announced

The agenda for this meeting will be emailed when available.

We invite everyone to visit our website. Become a member - it's free!

[www.grantcountynmbeekkeepers.org](http://www.grantcountynmbeekkeepers.org)

Respectively submitted,

*Barbara*

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