

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

City of Salinas, California

DATE: December 6, 2016

FROM: Megan Hunter, Director of CDD

BY: Teresa Kistler, Revenue Officer

SUBJECT: **2016 WEED ABATEMENT PROGRAM**

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Council approve the attached resolution approving charges for the abatement of weeds on seven properties within the City of Salinas and directing the Finance Director to collect the charges from the property owners.

DISCUSSION:

Section 14-28 of the City Code requires a public hearing to review the Weed Abatement Program and the work performed. The hearing allows Council to consider all protests and objections from property owners whose properties were cleared of weeds by the City.

During the weed abatement season, 137 owners were ordered to clear potential fire hazards from their properties. All but five (5) property owners complied with the City's request. The City abated weeds on the five (5) parcels listed in the attached Exhibit A, for charges totaling \$6,000.00, and 1 of the 5 property owners has paid all of their charges totaling \$1,962.50. Those property owners who have not paid have been notified of their total abatement charges, including a 25% administrative fee and applicable outstanding administrative citation fines and penalty fees. Property owners were also notified 30 days in advance of this public hearing.

This year, the number of complaints that Weed Abatement received increased 44%, from 95 to 137, but favorably, abatements decreased 38%, from 8 to 5. The City's complaint and abatement numbers are still considerably lower than the record highs of 2010, with 240 complaints and 24 abatements.

The increase in cases may be the result of Code Enforcement's continued program attentiveness, combined with their community outreach events. Owners are being held accountable through administrative citation fines.

ISSUE:

Shall Council approve the abatement charges and fees for properties listed in Exhibit A and direct the Finance Director to collect the charges from the property owners?

FISCAL IMPACT:

Abatement costs in the amount of \$4,200.00 have been paid from the General Fund. This amount plus the administrative fees and outstanding administrative citations totals \$5,317.50. Upon approval of this report, the Finance Director will bill the property owners of record. Should these approved charges not be paid within thirty days, they will become liens on the delinquent properties which would serve as the mechanism by which the City recovers its costs and associated fees.

TIME CONSIDERATIONS:

Timely resolution and reimbursement is desired to officially close these cases and reimburse the General Fund for abatement costs.

ALTERNATIVES/IMPLICATIONS:

Council may amend the amounts to be charged to the respective property owners, as may be appropriate.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS:

The Weed Abatement Program promotes Council goals of a “Safe, Livable Community” and “Quality of Life” by increasing public safety through elimination of hazardous conditions, and by preventing and eliminating visual blight in neighborhoods.

CONCLUSIONS:

The Weed Abatement program provides a vital community service that eliminates dangerous conditions, enhances public safety, and eliminates visual blight in neighborhoods at a very reasonable cost to the City, as well as to property owners. Validating the assessment is recommended in order for the City to secure payment of costs incurred to abate prohibited weeds.

Attachments:

Resolution

Exhibit A

Notices to Property Owners of Public Hearing