

Other solutions than deer killing

Dear Mayor Jim Gilmore,

I am writing to you as a member of the Deer Management Advisory Committee for Rochester Hills, Michigan. Rochester Hills has rolling hills, beautiful landscapes, continuous rivers, walking trails, a beautiful downtown, manicured lawns and countless parks. Rochester Hills was voted in the top 100 best cities in the country. **Our own government officials have clearly stated that killing deer for gardening purposes and because of a handful of people who consistently complain about their gardens on a regular basis, was an unrealistic and unacceptable reason to kill deer. It is every homeowners responsibility to maintain their landscape.** Just as one sprays their lawn with weed control or cutting their lawn. Especially, when there are countless products available on the market which can be sprayed on plants which deer are attracted to, such as liquid fence (has been proven to be 100% effective), or the scarecrow. Also, the vast selection of beautiful plant materials available which deer are not attracted to. The annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs are endless when selecting plants that do not appeal to deer. It was strictly based on reducing car/deer accidents.

Last year, the mayor and city council of Rochester Hills have appointed members to be part of this committee to review the facts on whether culling would be considered effective on reducing deer/vehicle accidents and cost effective. Our obligation to the city was to bring in experts and review all the data provided to us and make a decision based on proven facts, as opposed to unsubstantiated opinions.

Throughout this 10-month process, **according to experts advise and all of the compiled data which was presented to us, we unanimously voted and decided that culling would not be effective for reducing car/deer accidents in the city.** The following methods have clearly proven to be the most effective: clearing brush along the road side, installing flashing signs with reducing speed limit during certain times of the day/year (similar to school zone areas), immunocontraception, fencing and educating the public on reducing their speed in high deer crossing areas. Immunocontraception costs \$24/deer, as opposed to culling which costs \$300- \$500/deer. **Culling is not effective due to the fact that it is extremely costly, at the taxpayers expense, it is dangerous, inhumane and must be implemented year after year after year.**

The residents of our city were appalled that in a suburban/urban environment the city government would consider introducing high powered weapons. Within the last two years, it not only caused divisiveness in our community, but at the same time, residents have every intention on removing and replacing city government officials. **Any solid city entity would NEVER risk the chance of an accident taking place and allowing bullets and/or arrows to be introduced in a suburban/urban environment.**

Mayor, please listen to your own residents/taxpayers. You and your board of trustees have a responsibility to your constituents. You and your board of trustees have been appointed to represent and serve the people of your community. Again, it is your responsibility to listen to the public who voted you in office. I urge you not to proceed with the mass killing of deer and implement programs which are effective, non-lethal, humane and cost effective. People in suburban/urban environments throughout the country will not tolerate the use of high powered weapons in their community.

Monique Balaban
Rochester Hills, Mich.

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