



# MAYOR & COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE: September 17, 2013  
REGULAR  
ITEM #: 14  
MOTION

**AGENDA ITEM:** Sunfish Lake Deer Mitigation Hunt  
**SUBMITTED BY:** Dean Zuleger, City Administrator

**THROUGH:** Mayor Mike Pearson

**REVIEWED BY:** Mike Bouthilet, Mike Polehna, Washington County Parks

**SUGGESTED ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

- Introduction of Item ..... City Administrator
- Report/Presentation.....City Administrator
- Questions from Council to Staff ..... Mayor Facilitates
- Public Input, if Appropriate ..... Mayor Facilitates
- Call for Motion ..... Mayor & City Council
- Discussion ..... Mayor & City Council
- Action on Motion..... Mayor Facilitates

**SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED:** The City of Lake Elmo is proposing to participate with Washington County in a coordinated Deer Hunt to mitigate overpopulation in the Lake Elmo Park Reserve and Sunfish Lake Park.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:** City of Lake Elmo staff has experienced a higher than normal complaint frequency about the level of deer damage to trees, shrubs and plants in the area surrounding both Sunfish Lake Park and the Catholic Retreat Center. A recent flyover by the MNDNR resulted in a deer count of 43 per square acre in both the LEPR and Sunfish Park – this is 18-28 above a normal threshold area. In addition, Washington County reports that deer road kills are up slightly over previous years. As a result of the size of the herd and corresponding damage the City of Lake Elmo requested to join Washington County’s annual hunt. Previous hunts have yielded the following harvests:

1996	24 Deer
1999	7 Deer
2000	DNP
2005	12 Deer
2008	DNP

**STAFF REPORT:** . The City of Lake Elmo has agreed in principle to work in concert with Washington County to thin the deer herd through a special hunt to take place on November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> . The County will continue the hunt the following weekend. To accommodate this hunt, the City of Lake Elmo will conduct a lottery for those wishing to participate in this mitigation hunt. By random, (8) hunters will be chosen to help thin the herd.

To accommodate the hunt City will post the Park Property with notices two week in advance. City staff will participate in hunter safety training in concert with Washington County prior to the hunt. This will be a shot gun hunt only. All chosen hunters must attend the training.

During the two day hunt, the gates will be closed to the public and other entrances will be temporarily fenced off which in effect will close the park for the weekend. In addition, there will be a designated “No Hunt Area” adjacent to the Tapestry Neighborhood. Staff will be in the area to monitor the hunt. Hunter will be able to take their deer for registration to the LEPR.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Based upon the background information presented, the staff recommends that the City of Lake Elmo City Council approve the following:

**M/S/P            To approve the Sunfish Lake Park Deer Mitigation Hunt scheduled for November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> using a taxpayer lottery to choose (8) Lake Elmo Residents as the hunting party. This action will result in the closing of Sunfish Lake Park to the general public for the weekend of November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.**