



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: June 2, 2014

Agenda Item #: 8b

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Susan Parker, Town Administrator

TITLE: Bush-hogging Rates and Recommended Procedural Changes

ATTACH: Chapter 93. § 93.01

Summary: In reviewing fees, I reviewed Chapter 93: Health and Sanitation; Nuisances as it relates to maintaining the height of vegetated growth on privately-owned parcels. The Town currently utilizes staff to maintain these lots during the months of May and September for a flat rate of \$75.00. The Town generally bush-hogs up to 80 lots during those two months which coincides the beginning and end of our tourist season.

Since the Town is required to charge for the actual cost of bush-hogging a lot, staff calculated the hourly actual cost of providing this service. The hourly calculation included wages, benefits, gasoline, oil, blade replacement, an annual replacement cost for the tractor using a 15 year useful life cycle and clerical overhead which generates a projected actual cost of \$35.00 an hour.

Discussion: This rate competes with the local contractors who generally charge a flat fee of \$75.00 for a 50' x 50' lot and \$150.00 for a 100' x 100' lot.

Recommendation: I recommend the following steps if the Town Council wishes to continue maintaining vacant lots for public health and safety.

1. Develop a list of contractor's to provide this service and utilize them on a rotational basis. The Town will initially pay the contractor and then bill the property owner. If the property owner does not pay within the due date, the Town will lien the property.
2. Develop and adopt a late fee policy and apply a \$35 late fee for each month past due.
3. Develop and adopt a penalty provision for a violation and an associated fine within Chapter 93.