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ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER

(213) 202-2633

October 4, 2023

Honorable Eunisses Hernandez, Chair
Neighborhoods and Community Enrichment Committee
City Clerk, Room 395, City Hall
Attention: Eric Villanueva

RE: RESPONSE TO CF 23-0428 RELATIVE TO PARK RANGER STAFFING

Background:

On June 21, 2023 LA City Council adopted a motion instructing the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) to reevaluate and report on staffing needs for the Pacific Region, the resources needed to increase park patrolling by park rangers, and the process in which incidents at parks are being tracked.

Findings:

There are currently 30 sworn Park Rangers presently deployed from Griffith Park, Elysian Park, Hansen Dam and the Griffith Observatory. They may respond to issues within other regional parks such as the Sepulveda Basin or Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park and other locations within the park system.

Due to Park Ranger safety concerns regarding unarmed Park Rangers patrolling by themselves, RAP management and the labor union representing Park Rangers agreed to augment deployment to ensure each Park Ranger would have a partner on every shift. This augmented deployment coupled with Park Ranger retention challenges has prohibited the Park Ranger Division from regularly deploying from Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park (Ken Malloy) in the Pacific Region since May 2023. Ken Malloy is monitored remotely, in real time via video surveillance and the Park Ranger Division continues to respond to incidents and issues at Ken Malloy and other parks in the Pacific Region on an as-needed basis.



It should be noted that the Park Ranger Division is primarily deployed to the City's large regional parks and coordinates with both LAPD and LAFD on law enforcement and fire suppression needs throughout the City's vast park system.

As the Park Ranger Division works to expand by filling additional vacancies and retaining existing Park Ranger positions, the Park Ranger Division intends to reinstate full time deployment to Harbor Regional Park. The Park Ranger Division will also continue close coordination with LAPD on safety issues impacting parks in the Pacific Region.

Currently, there are 30 park ranger candidates that are in the hiring process. Due to the state standards, each ranger candidate takes approximately 6 months to complete the employment process. The Park Ranger Division is able to attract qualified candidates for the position of park ranger. However the Park Ranger Division does have significant retention challenges attributable to various issues including but not limited to compensation and benefits, the status of the Park Ranger classification remaining unarmed, and competition with other law enforcement agencies.

As it relates to the tracking of incidents, the Ranger Division "calls for service" and investigative stops in the city parks are memorialized on the rangers' Daily Field Activities Report (DFARs). All calls for service and ranger activities are entered into the Ranger Division Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system with an attached incident number. The information captured in the CAD system is therefore tracked, remains stored indefinitely, and information can be retrieved at any time.

It should be noted that the City Administrative Officer is currently developing a report regarding the Park Ranger Division, including deployment, staffing, and the duties and responsibilities of the Park Ranger classification.

Should you have any questions regarding this correspondence, contact Brenda Aguirre at 213-476-3826.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J/Kim", written in a cursive style.

JIMMY KIM
General Manager

CC: Councilmember Heather Hutt, CD 10
Councilmember John Lee, CD12
Councilmember Tim McOsker, CD15