

RESOLUTION NO. 20220324-093

WHEREAS, the City is facing a shortage of temporary seasonal employees as we head into the peak operational months of summer, which include lifeguards, camp counselors, cashiers, and more; and

WHEREAS, there are currently 33 operational pools in Austin for which 750 temporary lifeguards are needed to sustain summer operations and a lesser number to operate year-round pools; and

WHEREAS, there are 8 weeks of playground programs and 10 weeks of summer camp for which 330 temporary employees are needed to sustain summer programming and a lesser number to operate after-school/out-of-school time activities; and

WHEREAS, there are dozens of operations and maintenance positions that also require temporary employees, including cashiers, grounds workers, facilities workers, building assistants, administrative staff, and athletic staff to sustain both summer seasonal operations and year-round programs and services; and

WHEREAS, many pools and programs have been closed or have had reduced capacity for the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a smaller workforce; and

WHEREAS, nationally, workers are seeking higher wages, flexible work schedules, and generous benefits, resulting in workforce shortages across the country; and

WHEREAS, the Parks & Recreation Department (PARD) has communicated that if the City is unable to hire enough lifeguards, pools may not be able to open or operate at full capacity; and

WHEREAS, PARD has communicated that if the City is unable to hire enough summer camp staff that there may be a need to lower capacity to meet our childcare ordinance staff to child ratios; and

WHEREAS, PARD has communicated that if the City is unable to hire enough operations and maintenance seasonal staff that there may be reduced service levels for parks grounds and amenities; and

WHEREAS, PARD has launched a marketing campaign to hire temporary employees at an advertised \$15 per hour minimum with a summer completion bonus; and

WHEREAS, persons wishing to become a lifeguard are required to pay for uniforms and a \$20.00 training fee before they start working; and

WHEREAS, the seasons of 2018 and 2019 were record years for lifeguards, hiring more than 850 lifeguards for the summer of 2019; and

WHEREAS, lifeguarding is a critical and character-building role that requires life and death training and decision-making skills and teaches young people important life skills; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to explore and consider further strategies to incentivize the hiring of PARD employees including but not limited to:

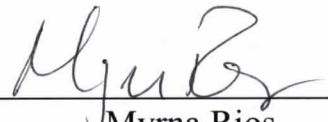
- waiving the training fees required to become a lifeguard;
- providing additional summer completion bonuses;
- increasing hourly pay;
- implementing longevity pay for temporary employees who return for consecutive seasons;
- hiring additional full-time equivalent (FTE) lifeguards and offering permanent employee status and/or benefits for certain employee classifications or commitments;
- increasing funding for the marketing and recruitment of lifeguards and temporary PARD staff;
- addressing transportation obstacles of prospective staff; and
- working with the Austin Parks Foundation and other stakeholders on creative funding solutions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back to Council with potential strategies and budget amendments, if required, for Council consideration by April 7, 2022.

ADOPTED: March 24, 2022

ATTEST:


Myrna Rios
City Clerk