



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

THROUGH: Stephanie Hayden-Howard, LMSW, Assistant City Manager

FROM: Kimberly A. McNeeley, M.Ed., CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department 

DATE: February 3, 2023

SUBJECT: Staff Update to Summer Employee Recruitment and Retention Bonus Program
(Resolution No. 20220817-004)

This memorandum serves as an update to [Ordinance No. 20220817 Council Member Ellis' Budget Rider 2 \(PARD Summer Employee Bonus Program\)](#) which directs the City Manager to provide Council with an initial status report on any actual or anticipated PARD vacancy savings available to fund recruitment and retention bonuses for PARD summer employees, including lifeguards and camp counselors, with the goal of offering bonuses at least as generous as the FY22 incentives, by February 1, 2023.

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department anticipates a vacancy savings that will allow for a recruitment and retention plan for lifeguards, camp counselors, and other summer employees that can equal the amount spent in FY22. Employment data from last year did show that bonuses were an effective incentive; however, the system did not fully incentivize work related to public service goals and obligations. The bonus structure in FY22 incentivized onboarding and working over the course of the final week of summer. Data shows that the bonuses incentivized employees to join the Department and work the last week of the summer, but data also shows that employee hours worked over the course of the summer were reduced. The Department believes that bonuses and/or other incentives can be deployed to help recruitment, retention, and also improve the number of hours employees sign up to work over the course of the summer. It is necessary and appropriate to develop an incentive program that incentivizes the Department's public service goals and obligations. Last year's program fell short.

Based upon the data analysis, the Department is currently vetting alternative incentive structures. The Department will finalize an alternative bonus and incentive structure that will help keep all operations open and successful in the summer of FY23 and will provide another update on or before March 1, 2023. Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (512) 947-6717.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager