




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

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

DATE: April 27, 2022

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Department Seasonal Employee Resolution No. 20220324-093
Staff Update

In a recent [memo](#) to Council regarding [Resolution No. 20220324-093](#), staff outlined strategies for recruiting and hiring summer program employees including lifeguards. This memo serves to confirm the strategies implemented to date.

The following strategies have been implemented and do not require additional funding:

- The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) has and will continue to emphasize the already approved free bus pass available to all City employees on all recruiting materials to mitigate transportation challenges
- PARD reviewed the hiring process and scheduling requirements associated with 15-year-old lifeguards increasing the number of aquatic locations available to them for working
- PARD is currently reviewing the region boundaries and consider further refinement to reduce employee travel requirements
- PARD continues to engage with partner organizations to explore fiscal donations, joint marketing efforts and incentive programs

The following strategies have been implemented and are funded using one-time FY2022 budget vacancy savings:

- PARD will supply staff uniforms to all temporary employees (inclusive of lifeguard uniforms).
- PARD will distribute \$500.00 work completed summer incentive bonuses for all temporary employees who meet work complete requirements for the specific area of operation.
- PARD will distribute an additional \$500.00 incentive bonus for lifeguards and other temporary aquatic staff who begin work by June 6, 2022.
- PARD will distribute an additional bonus of \$250.00 to any staff member who obtains an advanced certification of Open Water Lifeguarding, Swim Instructor Certifications, or Lifeguard Instructor Certifications.
- PARD will distribute an additional \$250.00 for other summer program and park staff who being work by June 6, 2022.
- PARD dedicated \$100,000 to develop and execute a comprehensive advertising and recruitment campaign.

The City of Austin (City) takes a comprehensive strategic approach when considering hourly pay rates for City positions, inclusive of PARD positions. This comprehensive approach requires a multi-tiered financial evaluation and human capital assessment to produce both long term and short-term strategies for meeting the City's talent recruitment and retention goals. Specific to Resolution No. 20220324-093, PARD worked collaboratively with the Human Resources Department and the Budget Office to:

- Analyze market pay rates for city job titles
- Conduct current wage comparisons of surrounding cities
- Consider Living Wage Working Group recommendations
- Consider the Financial Forecast
- Consider contractual negotiations and obligations
- Consider operational needs and organizational structure

The following charts outline the outcome of PARD's informal survey related payrates specific to lifeguard positions:

Austin Metro Area Hourly Rate Average \$12.80

| City | Organization | Special Certification (if any) | Pay Rate | Advertised Bonus |
|------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Leander | *Volente Beach | Open Water | \$20.00 | |
| Leander | Parks and Rec | | \$12.67 | |
| Round Rock | Parks and Rec | | \$11.25 | |
| Georgetown | Parks and Rec | | \$10.50 | |
| San Marcos | Parks and Rec | | \$12.00 | |
| Kyle | Parks and Rec | | \$12.00 | |
| Austin | *YMCA Central Texas | | \$15.00 | \$500 |
| Austin | University of Texas | | \$11.25 | |
| Cedar Park | Parks and Rec | | \$10.50 | |

*Non-government Operations

Outside of Austin Metro Area \$14.45

| City | Organization | Special Certification (if any) | Pay Rate | Advertised Bonus |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| San Antonio | *Six Flags | Amusement Park | \$16.00 | |
| San Antonio | *Sea World | Amusement Park | \$16.00 | |
| San Antonio | Parks and Rec | | \$12.00 | |
| New Braunfels | *Schlitterbahn | Amusement Park | \$16.00 | \$500 last year |
| New Braunfels | Parks and Rec | | \$12.27 | |

*Non-government Operations

In consideration of the Parks and Recreation Board Recommendations and the continued need for summer program staff to operate summer camps, playgrounds, and swimming pools, PARD, in coordination with the Human Resources Department and the Budget Office, is prepared to increase summer program and lifeguard base hourly rates to \$16.00 per hour for the 2022 summer season. This one-time increase will be absorbed by the City in fiscal year 2022. Any future hourly rate increase beyond the established \$15.00 per hour base pay will be contingent upon future funding availability.

In consideration of long-term solutions, the Human Resources Department and the Budget Office have committed to a city-wide analysis of base pay rates and associated fiscal impacts. This information will be presented to council through the Living Wage Working Group and the fiscal year 2023 budget process. This analysis will produce data driven city-wide rate recommendations, inclusive of base pay rates associated with PARD positions. The Human Resources Department has also committed to working with PARD to create an Aquatics job family inclusive of a full-time lifeguard position. Furthermore, the established FY2023 Budget development process will provide for consideration of a sustainable funding mechanism for full-time positions to support lifeguards.

PARD with the support of the Human Resources Department and the Budget Office has implemented or has intent to implement the directives outlined in Resolution No. 20220324-093, with one exception. While PARD is prepared to waive the \$20.00 training fee to become a lifeguard with the City of Austin, fee waivers require Council action to be initiated.

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (512) 974-6717

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