

MOTION

The City’s Park Rangers are sworn law enforcement officers and authorized to enforce the law and make arrests under Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 63.41. These Officers are graduates of the Police Academy, where they are trained alongside Police Department (LAPD) recruits. In addition, Park Rangers are required to have a four-year degree, a higher standard than many other law enforcement agencies in the State. Despite this, these officers are prohibited from being armed while on duty, while other park jurisdictions, including the State Department of Parks and Recreation and the Mountains and Recreation Conservation Authority have armed Park Rangers.

The City’s Park Rangers face numerous threats while carrying out their duties. Between January 2021 and October 2022 there were 21 assaults on police officers and Park Rangers in the City’s parks. Rangers have frequently had to call on LAPD due to gun, knife or shooting incidents in City parks, and hundreds of firearms have been recovered in the City’s parks by law enforcement over recent years. Given these threats to Rangers and the general public using the City’s parks, and the continued reductions in the number of sworn LAPD officers, Park Rangers should be authorized to be armed while on duty.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Attorney, with the assistance of the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) and the Police Department (LAPD), be requested to prepare and present an ordinance to amend Municipal Code Section 63.41 to authorize Park Rangers to carry a firearm while on duty, as allowed for under state law.

I FURTHER MOVE that RAP and the LAPD be directed to establish policies and procedures through Memoranda of Understanding to be followed by armed Park Rangers, and to establish any necessary use of force policies, training and investigatory standards needed to ensure that armed Rangers are trained and held to the same standards as sworn officers in the LAPD.

PRESENTED BY:


JOHN S. LEE
Councilmember, 12th District

SECONDED BY:



ORIGINAL

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