

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
AND JANICE HAHN

OCTOBER 13, 2020

**ENSURING RELIABLE AND CONSISTENT PUBLIC SAFETY IN LOS ANGELES**

**COUNTY PARKS**

Los Angeles County (County) has one of the largest locally-operated public parks systems in the nation, consisting of regional and neighborhood community parks, nature centers, arboreta, gardens and golf courses (County Parks). The County’s parks system is an integral part of the communities that it serves, and maintaining safe parks is crucial to the quality of life of millions of County residents whose only access to green and space may be at County Parks.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD), has provided community policing services at County Parks since 2009 through its Parks Services Bureau. However, for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-2021 LASD, without concurrence from the County Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), decided to curtail the Parks Services Bureau entirely. In response to such curtailment the FY 2020-2021 Supplemental Budget provides \$23.975M to restore funding to the Park Services Bureau. However, LASD recently indicated that the additional funding to restore the Sheriff’s curtailment of the Parks Services Bureau would not be used for County Parks as intended by the County Board of Supervisors (Board). Community policing functions remain a necessity in County Parks and LASD is failing to make this essential service, to which the Board has provided

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**MOTION**

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RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

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a specific allocation of resources, a priority. Appropriate fiscal safeguards and remedies should be instituted to ensure that the funds provided to the Parks Services Bureau serve their intended purpose.

While DPR has worked closely with the Parks Services Bureau to create a community-informed safety strategy for County Parks, if LASD can no longer be relied upon to prioritize and perform these public safety functions, it presents a unique opportunity to reimagine and enhance the County's approach to improving the long-term security and safety of park visitors – in a manner that is better aligned with the Board's vision for public safety and justice – potentially including further incorporation of alternative crisis response and violence prevention strategies.

Through unanimous approval of motions such as the "Crisis Response Coordination" (Hahn/Barger, March 4, 2020) and "Alternatives to Law Enforcement for Crisis Response" (Hahn, June 23, 2020), the Board has acknowledged that not all crises require a law enforcement response and that alternative response strategies can be safer and achieve better health and social outcomes. Many mental health, substance abuse, physical health, homeless, and other health and human services crises are better served by response teams with appropriate training and expertise such as the Psychiatric Mobile Response Team and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Emergency Outreach Team. Integration of these strategies into the County's public safety models can enhance the long-term safety at County Parks and nearby communities while maximizing public resources spent on public safety services.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Instruct the Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to report back in writing within 14 days on options to immediately satisfy the public safety and community policing gap, including, if necessary the feasibility of identifying a third-party to provide this service on a short-term basis. The report should also consider the potential transfer from the Los Angeles County (County) Sheriff's Department (LASD) to

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\$23.975 million allocated in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Supplemental Budget to restore previously curtailed Parks Services Bureau funds to the DPR budget to provide funding dedicated for preserving public safety at County parks.

2. Instruct the Acting CEO and the Director of DPR, in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Mental Health, the Director of the Department of Public Health, in coordination with other relevant stakeholders, to report back within **90 days** on potential opportunities to enhance and reimagine Community Policing at County Parks. This report should include:
  - a. Recommendations for creating and funding a public safety division within DPR that considers utilizing funds currently allocated for the LASD Parks Services Bureau; and
  - b. Recommendations for alternative staffing models for providing public safety and community policing at County parks including the use of unarmed staff trained in crisis response and violence prevention strategies.
3. If any policy, ordinance or ordinance amendment is needed to enable the recommendations referenced above, instruct County Counsel, in consultation with the Director of DPR, to report back in 90 days, in writing, with the requisite draft policies, ordinances, or ordinance amendments.

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(JB/CAS/CG/DJ)