O-23- 07

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE POSITION OF PARKS POLICE OFFICER, PRESCRIBING THEIR LAW ENFORCEMENT DUTIES; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Department currently employs Park Rangers who, pursuant to Section 1.2.3 of North Little Rock Municipal Code ("NLRMC"), Chapter 10 – Parks and Recreation, function as code enforcement officers of the City whose authority is limited to enforcing the Parks Ordinance through the issuance of citations; and

WHEREAS, the Park Rangers regularly encounter situations in the City's parks that require a law enforcement response, necessitating the Park Rangers to call North Little Rock Police Department to dispatch an officer; and

WHEREAS, NLRMC Chapter 10, Section 1.2.3 prohibits Park Rangers from being armed; and

WHEREAS, the City has become increasingly concerned about the Park Rangers' safety while patrolling in the City's parks, as well as the deployment of police resources to assist in the performance on law enforcement functions in the City's parks; and

WHEREAS, Arkansas law and the rules promulgated by the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training ("CLEST") allow the City Council to authorize "specialized police personnel" to be employed by a law enforcement agency whose duty as prescribed by ordinance is enforcing some part of the criminal laws of this state and their authority is limited to the facility or area in which they work; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that it is in the best interest of the City and its residents to have Parks Police Officers who are employed by the North Little Rock Police Department and who are authorized to enforce the criminal laws of the State of Arkansas and local ordinances and regulations of the City of North Little Rock.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1: That the North Little Rock Police Department is hereby authorized to employ Parks Police Officers, in the number authorized by the City's quota ordinance, as specialized police personnel as defined by Arkansas Law and the rules promulgated by the Arkansas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Training.

SECTION 2: That the Parks Police Officers shall be authorized to enforce the laws of the State of Arkansas, as well as to issue citations for violations of the North Little Rock Municipal Code and North Little Rock municipal ordinances, with said enforcement powers being limited to

the areas in which they work, which shall only include North Little Rock city parks, Argenta Plaza, the Downtown RV Park, and the River Trail.

SECTION 3: That Parks Police Officers shall be required to complete all training and certification standards for specialized police personnel required and approved by the Arkansas Commission and Law Enforcement Standards and Training.

SECTION 4: That all ordinances or parts of ordinance in conflict herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of the conflict.

SECTION 5: That the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable and if any section, phrase or provision shall be declared or held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the remainder of the sections, phrases or provisions.

SECTION 6: It is hereby found and determined that employing Parks Police Officers who are certified by CLEST and who are authorized by law to enforce the criminal laws of the State of Arkansas and North Little Rock municipal ordinances, is immediately necessary, and being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health, safety and welfare, THEREFORE, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval.

PASSED:

APPROVED:

Mayor Terry C. Hartwick

SPONSOR:

Terry C. Hartwick By AF

Mayor Terry C. Hartwick

ATTEST:

Diane Whitbey, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Amy Beckman Fields, City Attorney

PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY/ABF

FILED 11:07 A.M. _____ P.M.
By A. Fields, City Atty
DATE 2/7/23

Diane Whitbey, City Clerk and Collector
North Little Rock, Arkansas

RECEIVED BY BTyler