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MICHAEL A. SHULL
GENERAL MANAGER

September 3, 2014

Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair
Ad Hoc on Film and TV Production Jobs Committee
c/o City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Councilmember Krekorian:

RESPONSE TO COUNCIL FILE NO. 14-0471

INSTRUCTION 1:

The Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), the City Administrative Officer (CAO), and the Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) to report on the number of Recreation and Park monitors needed to process permits promptly and options for adjusting permit fees to recover the cost of additional park monitors.

Department Response:

The Department's Park Film Office, (PFO), processes approximately 2,000 film permits every year. In addition to the 2000 permits issued, there are approximately 1500 additional film permit applications processed that do not lead to permits, but require the same level of administrative work. Filming at RAP facilities and properties has increased by at least 15 percent over the last two years, and in 2014 is showing no signs of slowing down, as RAP sites remain more popular than ever.

With all this permit work, and the increased popularity of RAP sites, it is more important than ever for RAP to maintain proper staffing levels in the PFO. This topic was also discussed in a recent meeting with the Economic and Work Force Development Department, the Mayor's Office, Film LA, and representatives of the film industry. During the meeting concerns were discussed regarding the PFO's ability to keep up with industry demands, and the need for additional fulltime staff to adequately handle requests for filming on RAP property.

Due to several vacant positions, the prolonged hiring freeze, and a lack of authority to hire even



part-time staff, the RAP PFO has experienced some challenges in workflow continuity, which, has led to some delays in responding to film industry requests for permits and other assistance. The Park Activity Monitor (PAM) is a class of part-time RAP employees who are absolutely critical in monitoring, and providing film location oversight. Filming cannot take place in City parks without PAM's on location. Due to the hiring challenges, RAP was not able to adequately staff enough PAM's for the number of requests coming in. The PFO must keep a minimum of 50 part-time PAM's on payroll at all times to adequately cover filming locations. Lack of sufficient numbers of trained PAM's on staff is the number one reason that filming in the City's parks could be possibly delayed.

Current Status

Since the introduction and adoption of Council File No. 14-0471, the inadequate staffing levels in the PFO have somewhat improved. Recently A full time Park Maintenance Supervisor was hired to liaison with film production companies, and supervise the PAM's. This was a critical position, and has already started to improve RAP's ability to quickly process requests for filming. Additionally, a full-time Senior Park Services Attendant has been hired to oversee clerical and permitting functions in the PFO. RAP was also recently given authority from the Managed Hiring Committee to hire thirty, (30), part-time PAM's to rebuild our pool of field monitors, and meet industry needs.

In response to industry concerns, PFO management has improved on communication by implementing a "Buddy System", where a narrow focus has been established on the staff's ability to share, amongst each other, all information to improve continuity and knowledge of film requests. The PFO training manual is currently being updated and upcoming training sessions with the film industry are being scheduled. The PFO is close to having adequate staff to process permits and provide field service; however, due to attrition, the PFO is lacking two, (2) Park Service Attendant II positions critical to the permitting process. These two positions are necessary for handling phone calls, processing request, contacting field staff, communicating to Film LA and approving guidelines for permits.

INSTRUCTION 3:

That RAP and the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) to work with the Information Technology Agency, and for the Departments to report on the feasibility of developing a connection with FilmLA's computer systems for the purpose of efficiently tracking locations, staff and permits among departments and with the City's contractor.

Department Response:

RAP recently met with representative of the Fire Department, the Mayor's Office, CAO, CLA, and representatives of Council District 2, and Film LA to discuss automating film permitting, and establishing a system that will allow RAP and other departments to interface with Film LA. It is hoped that this new system will increase service levels to the film industry, and reduce duplication of effort.

The PFO currently processes film reservation requests through a computerized software program that is not connected to Film LA. The current system is antiquated and does not communicate directly with Film LA's permitting system. The desire is that RAP's system be connected directly to Film LA with full access for both organizations. It is hoped that this will improve response time, and provide constant updating of critical information to meet industry demands. In response to this recommendation RAP's Director of Systems is currently working with Film LA, the Economic and Work Force Development Department and the Mayor's Office, to determine appropriate software to enhance communication between RAP and Film LA.

Authority to Hire

It is recommended that RAP be given authority to fill two (2) vacant Park Services Attendant II positions both of which are assigned to the Park Film Office. These positions are critical for the PFO to adequately process film permits and keep up with the ever increasing film industry work load.

Park Fee Increase

It is recommended that a relatively small increase in fees could assist the PFO in funding the costs associated with processing, and monitoring film permits in City parks. The Park Film Office is an "off-budget" special funded function that relies on the collection of fees to support its operation.

The current fee for filming on park property is \$450 per day. It is proposed that the daily fee for filming be increased to \$562.50. This relatively small increase would provide necessary funding to sustain the functions of the Park Film Office. Recommendations for adjusting the fee schedule would also have to be presented to the Board of Recreation and Parks Commissioners for consideration. It is important to note that park filming fees have not been raised in over 7 years.

Thank you for your interest in the RAP Park filming operation. Our goal is to continue to serve the film industry, keep jobs in Los Angeles, and provide the best customer service possible.

Honorable Paul Krekorian
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Should you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (213) 202-2633.
Sincerely,

MICHAEL A. SHULL
General Manager



KEVIN W. REGAN
Assistant General Manager
Operations Branch

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cc: File