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HOUSE BILL NO. 1177

Offered January 13, 2010

Prefiled January 13, 2010

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 15.2-6021 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 15.2-6021.1, relating to the powers of Southwest Regional Recreation Authority rangers.*

Patron—Phillips

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 15.2-6021 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-6021.1 as follows:

§ 15.2-6021. Southwest Regional Recreation Area rangers.

The Spearhead Trails Executive Director, with the consent of the board, is authorized to establish, in compliance with the provisions of this chapter, a ranger police department. The Spearhead Trails Executive Director, with the consent of the board, may appoint qualified persons as Southwest Regional Recreation Area rangers. The ranger may enforce the rules adopted by the Board and issue civil penalties for violations thereof and further be eligible for appointment as a special conservator of the peace in accordance with § 19.2-13 as necessary and proper to protect and enforce the safe use and enjoyment of the properties under the use and control of the Southwest Regional Recreation Area Authority. Upon application of the board, the circuit court of the City of Norton or the County of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, and Wise, shall, by order, appoint qualified applicants, pursuant to § 15.2-6021.1, to be Southwest Regional Recreation Area rangers. Each ranger appointed to the department pursuant to this section shall comply with the training or other requirements for law-enforcement officers established by the Department of Criminal Justice Services pursuant to Chapter 1 (§ 9.1-100 et seq.) of Title 9.1.

The ranger may preserve law and order. The rangers may exercise the powers and duties conferred by law upon police officers of cities, towns, or counties, and shall be so deemed, including but not limited to the provisions of Chapters 5 (§ 19.2-52 et seq.), 7 (§ 19.2-71 et seq.), and 23 (§ 19.2-387 et seq.) of Title 19.2 on any premises that is part of the Southwest Regional Recreation Area, any immediately adjacent property of landowners who are making land available for public use under agreement with the Authority, and on streets, highways, or other public lands utilized by the trails, parking areas, or related recreational facilities and other immediately adjacent public lands. The assignment of rangers to the duties authorized by this section shall not supersede the authority of any law-enforcement officers. The salary of all rangers shall be paid by the board. The board shall furnish each ranger with an official uniform to be worn while on duty and shall furnish and require each ranger while on duty to wear a shield with an appropriate inscription and to carry credentials certifying the person's identity and authority as a ranger. The board may petition the circuit court pursuant only to a request by the local law-enforcement agency for concurrent jurisdiction.

§ 15.2-6021.1. Investigation of prospective rangers; terms of employment; uniforms, etc.

A. Prior to appointment as a Southwest Regional Recreation Authority ranger, each person shall apply to and be investigated by the board, using any and all necessary resources, to determine whether the person is responsible, honest, and in all ways capable of performing the duties of a ranger.

B. The salary of all rangers shall be paid by the board.

C. The board shall furnish each ranger with an official uniform to be worn while on duty and shall furnish and require each ranger while on duty to wear a shield with an appropriate inscription and to carry credentials certifying the person's identity and authority as a ranger.

INTRODUCED

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