

1 **ORDINANCE NO. _____**
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3 **AN ORDINANCE TO DECLARE IT UNFEASIBLE AND IMPRACTICAL**
4 **TO BID; TO AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO AWARD A**
5 **CONTRACT TO APTUS FINANCIAL TO ASSIST ELIGIBLE CITY**
6 **EMPLOYEES TO SEEK STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS; TO**
7 **ESTABLISH AN INITIAL FEE AND AN ANNUAL RENEWAL FEE; TO**
8 **DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND, FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**
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10 **WHEREAS**, student loan debt for post-secondary education is a major burden on young employees;
11 and,

12 **WHEREAS**, using national statistics it is estimated that the outstanding student loan debt for City
13 employees is approximately Eighteen Million Dollars (\$18,000,000.00), and further that the payment of
14 such debt has been impacted by periods of automatic payment deferral over the last three (3) years; and,

15 **WHEREAS**, the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program allows employees who work full-time in
16 public service for ten (10) years while paying on the balance of the student debt can qualify for debt
17 forgiveness; and,

18 **WHEREAS**, Project 120 is the only such program found in Arkansas designed to determine eligible
19 City employees for such loan forgiveness, survey the needs of this group, and provide reminders so they
20 can take advantage of these programs; and,

21 **WHEREAS**, research has shown that better financial security provides for a happier and more
22 committed work force.

23 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CITY**
24 **OF LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS:**

25 **Section 1.** Because of the unique nature of the Project 120 Program by Aptus Financial to assist City
26 employees qualify for and obtain the benefits of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Act, the Board
27 declares that it is impractical and unfeasible to competitively bid a contract for these services.

28 **Section 2.** The City Manager is authorized to enter into a contract with Aptus Financial for an amount
29 not to exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) between the date of this ordinance and December 31,
30 2023, to establish and implement a Student Loan Forgiveness Program that includes, among other aspects,
31 a survey of eligible City employees, a plan for each such employee to benefit from the Public Service Loan
32 Forgiveness Act, support to position such loans in the best manner for those employees who have up to ten
33 (10) years of service with the City, to establish virtual office hours for questions, and to send reminders to

1 such employees as necessary to stay on track with their individual requests for loan forgiveness due to the
2 performance of public service work.

3 **Section 3.** Funds for this agreement will come in 2023 from the Human Resources Special Project
4 Account No. 108279-S527C516.

5 **Section 4.** If this contract is extended past December 31, 2023, the parties agree that the annual cost
6 of the agreement will be Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) per year.

7 **Section 5. Severability.** In the event any title, section, paragraph, item, sentence, clause, phrase, or
8 word of this ordinance is declared or adjudged to be invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration or
9 adjudication shall not affect the remaining portions of the ordinance which shall remain in full force and
10 effect as if the portion so declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional were not originally a part of the
11 ordinance.

12 **Section 6. Repealer.** All ordinances, resolutions, bylaws, and other matters inconsistent with this
13 ordinance including, but not limited to Little Rock, Ark., Rev. Code § 2-116 (1988), and Little Rock, Ark.,
14 Ordinance No. 22,215, § 8 (December 20, 2022), are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

15 **Section 7. Emergency Clause.** *The ability City employees who have incurred student loan debt to
16 utilize a method for the forgiveness of such debt through public service with the City, and thereby to provide
17 a happier and more productive work force to the City because of the end of this financial worry, is essential
18 to the public health, safety, and welfare; an emergency is, therefore, declared to exist and this ordinance
19 shall be in full force and effect from and after the date of its passage.*

20 **PASSED: August 8, 2023**

21 **ATTEST:**

APPROVED:

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24 **Susan Langley, City Clerk**

Frank Scott, Jr., Mayor

25 **APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:**

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28 **Thomas M. Carpenter, City Attorney**

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