

City moves to shut down operations of four sober living homes

The City of Costa Mesa has taken legal action against the owners and operators of four sober living homes who continue to operate the homes in violation of the City's municipal code.

The City Council unanimously approved taking the action against the owners and operators after the facilities each continued to operate after having failed to obtain the required permits.

"We are putting these unlawful operators on notice that we will not allow them to openly flout our ordinances," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "We fully support the rights of individuals to seek recovery from addiction, but our ordinances are designed to minimize the concentration of those homes and avoid disrupting the atmosphere of our neighborhoods."

In the complaint filed in Superior Court, the City maintains that the owners and operators of Casa Capri Recovery Center and Casa Capri, LLC at 269 and 271 16th Place in Costa Mesa are maintaining a public nuisance and should be shut down.

Also named in the complaint are Jeremy Broderick and Mellissa Goodman based on their role with Casa Capri, and Zackary Irani and Timothy Carr, each as owners of one of the two properties. Each of the Casa Capri homes consists of 14 recovery beds. The City filed the complaint after their requests for conditional use permits for these properties were ultimately denied by the City Council.

In a separate complaint filed in Superior Court, the City contends that the owners of the two sober living homes

operated by Ohio House LLC at 647 and 653 Joann Street in Costa Mesa are maintaining a public nuisance and should be shut down.

Also named in the Ohio House complaint is Brandon Stump based on his role with Ohio House, and Richard Perlin, Nancy Perlin and Dolores Perlin, each as owners of one of the two properties.

The Ohio House properties consist of six recovery beds each. The City filed the complaint after the facilities continued to operate after the property owners withdrew their appeal of the denial of their permit applications.

Costa Mesa votes to join County in legal action to stop needle exchange program

The City of Costa Mesa agreed in a special City Council meeting Friday to join the County of Orange in their lawsuit seeking an injunction to prevent the Orange County Needle Exchange Program (OCNEP) from implementing a needle exchange program that was approved by the state of California's Department of Public Health earlier this week.

Council also requested the City Attorney's office bring forward an urgency ordinance for consideration at the August 7 City Council meeting declaring a moratorium against all needle exchange programs in the City of Costa Mesa.

The City Council voted unanimously to pursue the legal action.

“California public health officials disregarded overwhelming evidence that the group proposing to operate the needle exchange program in our city has been negligent in the past,” Mayor Sandy Genis said. “Their prior record in Santa Ana and increased needle litter that took place once their program began should have been enough to torpedo this bad idea once and for all. Their application grossly misrepresented the nature of the surrounding community and their non-existent community outreach efforts.”

In April of 2018, the City of Costa Mesa learned through social media that a group by the name of the Orange County Needle Exchange Program (OCNEP) had filed an application to distribute needles in Westside Costa Mesa. No member of the OCNEP had previously reached out to city officials or law enforcement staff regarding this application.

The OCNEP had previously operated a needle exchange program at the Santa Ana Civic Center but that operation was shut down by city officials who revoked OCNEP’s permit after a massive increase in needle litter that posed a threat to public safety. Several people were

pricked by discarded needles, including members of the Santa Ana Police Department. The city of Costa Mesa received written and photographic evidence of the needle litter.

Once the public learned of this application, the calls and letters to City Hall were overwhelming in community opposition.

The Costa Mesa Police Department and the City Attorney’s Office submitted evidence and statements to state officials that chronicled the substantial risks to public health the program presents to the Costa Mesa community and asked that the application be denied.

In the City Attorney’s response to the state asking for the application to be denied, the memo stated that OCNEP’s own

application was incorrect or incomplete; that there was evidence of projected harm to public safety presented by local law enforcement and that the applicant did not meet all the requirements in the state of California's Health and Safety Code.

In its approval of the needle exchange program, the state granted OCNEP the right to distribute needles in Costa Mesa on 17th Street, from the intersection of Whittier Avenue and west to the edge of the city boundary at the Banning Ranch property each Wednesday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The state also granted the OCNEP the right to operate needle exchange programs in the City of Orange, Anaheim and Santa Ana.

To see the city's initial opposition documents go to our Needle Exchange Program Facts webpage [here](#).

Last day of Fire & Rescue's Fairview Park air operations is Thursday Aug. 2

The final day of Fire & Rescue Air Operations Training at Fairview Park is Thursday Aug. 2 from 8 a.m to 1 p.m.

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue has been partnering with several local agencies to conduct Air Operations training at Fairview Park to prepare for the potential of wildfires in the area, as well as regional rescues, in addition to improving communications and inter-operability between our respective emergency ground and air resources.

CMF&R is the host of the operations, which has already taken place at the south end of the park in July.

The Orange County Fire Authority and the Orange County Sheriff's office and several Orange County fire agencies will be taking part in the exercise. The training will only be static in nature, so there will be no active air operations or water drops, other than landing at the onset of the training and departure at the conclusion of the training.

Fire officials have worked closely with city staff to ensure that all environmental and wildlife concerns are addressed prior to the training and have worked with the local residential community to address any concerns related to the training. We appreciate the community's support of this important training.

State approves needle exchange program despite known public safety concerns

City officials learned today that the California Department of Public Health's Office of AIDS has approved an application for a mobile needle exchange operation in Costa Mesa (and three other Orange County cities) despite overwhelming community opposition and warnings from the Costa Mesa Police Department and the City Attorney's Office about the substantial risks to public health the program presents to the Costa Mesa community.

"I am appalled that state officials would approve this needle exchange program in our community," Mayor Sandy Genis said.

“The applicants for this program made no public outreach efforts in Costa Mesa and their poor application demonstrates they don’t care about our city. Further, they have a terrible record when it comes to collecting the needles that are passed out at a rate of 20 needles or more for every one collected. We are going to quickly examine our options and will continue to oppose this irresponsible program.”

Mayor Genis noted the area the exchange is being proposed to operate is in very close proximity to housing, businesses and Whittier Elementary School.

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The OCNEP had previously operated a needle exchange program at the Santa Ana Civic Center but that operation was shut down by city officials who revoked OCNEP’s permit after a massive increase in needle litter that posed a threat to public safety. Several people were pricked by discarded needles, including members of the Santa Ana Police Department. The city of Costa Mesa received written and photographic evidence of the needle litter.

In a review of the application and in discussions with local government leaders, the Costa Mesa City Attorney’s office

concluded the following regarding the OCNEP's application:

- The information in the application is incorrect or incomplete.
- There is evidence of projected harm to public safety presented by local law enforcement.
- The applicant does not meet all the requirements in the state of California's Health and Safety Code.

"As demonstrated in photographs, letters and other documentary evidence of OCNEP's operation within the Santa Ana Civic Center, it is clear that OCNEP is not able to provide for the safe recovery and disposal of used syringes and sharp waste from all of its participants within a fixed location and that evidence is in the State's possession," according to a statement the city attorney provided to the state Department of Public Health.

In addition, the Costa Mesa Police Department conducted thorough research of this needle exchange program based on the experiences in Santa Ana and concluded the threat to the public's health was far too great to allow this exchange program to operate in Costa Mesa.

"It is clear in discussions with officials from the Santa Ana Police Department and reviewing written correspondence and photographs provided by the City of Santa Ana regarding the prevalence of dangerous and potentially harmful discarded needles within the community, that this needle exchange program poses a serious risk to public safety and health by inadequately accounting for the collection of the volume of needles dispensed," according to a statement the Costa Mesa Police Department provided the state.

In light of this decision by the state, the City of Costa Mesa will be in contact with officials in Santa Ana, Anaheim and Orange and the City Council will explore all potential options to protect Costa Mesa and its residents, business owners and

visitors.

Any residents wishing to express concerns about this approval can call Dr. Karen Smith, Director and State Public Health Officer, at 916-558-1784.

To see the city's initial opposition documents go to our Needle Exchange Program Facts webpage here. For further questions please contact Costa Mesa's Public Information Officer Tony Doderio at 714-754-5288 or via email at citynews@costamesaca.gov.

Howard Sadamoto gets the City Manager Leadership Award for July

Assistant City Manager Tammy Letourneau presented Public Services maintenance worker Howard Sadamoto with the City Manager Leadership Award for July at the monthly Meet and Greet employee event on Thursday July 26.

"Howard has always been someone you can depend on to get the job done with professionalism and courtesy," Letourneau said. "He is a great example for all employees to follow and has been since he first became a member of the City family."

Sadamoto began his career at the City of Costa Mesa in 1996 as a part-time maintenance assistant and later worked as a part-time custodian for Parks & Community Services. This position

was later absorbed by the maintenance department in 2001, and at that time Sadamoto was promoted to full-time status.

Prior to joining the City of Costa Mesa, Sadamoto was employed as a middle school teacher, a Brink's armored transport guard, a steam line plant worker, a Los Angeles Department of Water & Power worker and a health inspector for Los Angeles County, where he inspected restaurants and markets for compliance.

Sadamoto is as avid sports fan and enjoys watching the Lakers, Dodgers and UCLA Basketball. He has been a UCLA basketball season ticket holder since 1980 and has not missed a home game since the 1980 season.

Sadamoto, who grew up in the Boyle Heights neighborhood of Los Angeles, has a bachelor's degree in biology from USC.

In addition to honoring Sadamoto, Letourneau celebrated several new employees, newly promoted employees and one employee who is retiring.

Kiera Pascua is a new intern in the Development Services Department. In Finance, Cassandra Burkhart is the new Executive Secretary, Jackqueline Nguyen is a new Accounting Specialist I and Kelly Telford is the Finance Director. In the Parks & Community Services Department,

Katie Hernandez, Kelly Hughes, Sergio Lugo and Kalani Lopez are all new Recreation Leaders II and Kristina Roche is the new Sr. Lifeguard.

In the Police Department, Katharine Pancescu is a new Police Records Technician and Jeffrey Vaughn a Property/Evidence Specialist, and in the Parks & Community Services, Victor Castillo and Yesennia Villa were promoted to Instructor Guard and Annie Sumioka to Recreation Specialist.

Finally, Letourneau congratulated Assistant Finance Director Colleen O'Donoghue on her upcoming retirement. O'Donoghue has

had a 33-year career in accounting, 14 and half of those with the City of Costa Mesa. Letourneau thanked O'Donoghue for delaying her retirement by several months to help out in Finance as it was short on personnel.

Public Services increases use of organic weed control with pilot program at Luke Davis Field

Public Services recently teamed up with Organics Alive LLC, Athletic Field Specialists, Non-Toxic Irvine and Non-Toxic Costa Mesa for a year-long pilot program and study on the use of organic fertilizers and materials only at the Luke Davis Sports Field.

The program officially started on Thursday, July 12 and relies solely on organic materials including brewed, beneficial microbial rich solutions, humic acids and worm castings.

The team will inspect, photograph and monitor the site throughout the year taking soil samples on a regular basis to document the microbial activity in the soil as well as gauge the overall success of the program with regards to aesthetics, playability and health of the turf and soil.

This pilot program follows the city's effort since 2014 to evaluate the effectiveness of organic materials for weed control in addition to an ongoing review of its and other local agencies' cultural maintenance practices, including mowing heights and plant and shrub trimming standards, to

ensure current practices were appropriate to maintain plant health and decrease the need for synthetic pesticides.

Since that time and following the success of the effort, the application of synthetic weed control material in passive parks and sports fields with mixed turf was eliminated. Additionally, the use of glyphosate in parks citywide has been eliminated.

The city has replaced the use of glyphosate with organic materials. The City has also significantly increased the use of mulch to naturally prevent invasive weeds in planters and tree wells. The city more than doubled the amount of mulch used in FY 2017-18.

This pilot program will be used to further evaluate the use of organic materials and maintenance practices throughout the City of Costa Mesa.

Learn the many ways to keep your home mosquito free

With mosquito season in full swing, the Orange County Mosquito and Vector Control District has launched a “Make Your Home Mosquito-Free” media campaign, providing messages and recommendations on social media, PSAs and billboards for residents to declare their independence from mosquitoes all summer long.

Vector Control reminds the public that aside from being a nuisance, mosquitoes can cause sickness and death through the diseases they can carry, including Zika and West Nile virus. According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control and

Prevention, California leads the nation in mosquito-borne disease cases since 2004 with more than 9,000 mosquito-transmitted disease cases reported.

There is currently only one confirmed mosquito sample with West Nile virus in Orange County this year (Garden Grove), and there is also confirmed West Nile virus activity in San Bernardino County, however, no human cases reported.

There are, however, confirmed cases of West Nile virus in neighboring Los Angeles and Riverside counties.

Click [here](#) for information on how to make your home mosquito free.

Costa Mesa Day at the Fair

The 128th annual OC Fair continues its run through Aug. 12. and Friday July 20 is Costa Mesa Day at the fair.

While several cities share a “day,” fair officials have designated one entire day solely for the City of Costa Mesa.

That day, residents, business and civic leaders are invited to come to the fair, sing the National Anthem and take part in a flag-raising ceremony, which begins at 12:30.

The OC Fair offers residents a \$2 discount admission coupon, which are available at City Hall.

Click [here](#) for more information on this year’s OC Fair.

City reaches legal agreement on Costa Mesa Motor Inn site development that includes affordable units

The City of Costa Mesa has reached an agreement to settle lengthy disputes over development of the Costa Mesa Motor Inn site and challenges to the city's motel ordinance.

The Los Angeles Superior Court entered a judgment last week that allows development on the Motor Inn site of a new apartment project with up to 200 units, including nine units reserved for very low-income tenants for the next 55 years.

The settlement agreement effectively ends three lawsuits, two filed in 2014 challenging a city ordinance that regulates long-term stays at motels, and one objecting to the City Council's 2015 land use approvals for the owner-applicant to develop a 224-unit project on the Motor Inn site.

"I am pleased we can put this behind us, get rid of a closed, dilapidated motel that has become an eyesore and attractive nuisance along Harbor Boulevard, and importantly reach a beneficial settlement for the litigants and the community," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "I'm glad a mutual settlement was achieved in a way that makes available some financial assistance to former Motor Inn residents and adds more affordable housing in our city with nine very low-income units to be part of the new development."

Mayor Genis also thanked Council Members John Stephens and Jim Righheimer for their hard work on the settlement.

Under this settlement agreement, Miracle Mile Properties, the owner of the land and owner/operator of the closed Motor Inn at 2277 Harbor Blvd., agreed to reduce the number of apartments to 200, of which nine will be affordable to very low-income families or individuals under a 55-year restrictive covenant.

The total amount paid in settlement of the litigation is \$2,325,000, of which the city is paying \$1,362,500. The total settlement amount includes \$1.4 million to plaintiff's lawyers, \$250,000 to individuals and \$50,000 to the Costa Mesa Motel Residents Association.

The settlement agreement also calls for \$600,000 to be deposited into a Motor Inn Fund, of which \$300,000 will come from the City of Costa Mesa, to be set aside for financial assistance to former long-term occupants of the Motor Inn. Payments from the fund will be handled by a claims administrator hired by the plaintiffs' attorneys up to \$25,000.

The City of Costa Mesa's Housing Authority currently owns and operates eight small apartment complexes with 30 units of affordable housing on West 18th and James Streets. Under this settlement and within the next 90 days, the city through its Housing Authority will solicit proposals from experienced affordable housing developers for continued operation of these properties as long-term affordable housing for another 55 years.

In addition, by this settlement the City Council will evaluate the ordinance regulating long-term occupants at local motels; and, when the State of California ultimately allows development of the acreage at the Fairview Developmental Center, the city will promote affordable housing to be part of new housing developments at that site.

With the settlement agreement and judgment in place, Miracle

Mile intends to proceed with the demolition of the Motor Inn and construction of the new apartment development at the site.

Jennifer King rejoins the City of Costa Mesa as new Assistant Finance Director

The City of Costa Mesa is pleased to announce that Jennifer King, a former Revenue Supervisor for the city, has been hired as the new Assistant Finance Director effective Monday July 16.

King was employed with the city of Costa Mesa for two and a half years before taking the position of Finance Administrator for the City of Irvine.

“We are very pleased to welcome Jennifer back to the City of Costa Mesa,” Finance Director Kelly Telford said. “Her previous experience with the city and her expertise in accounting and financial reporting will be of great benefit to the Finance Department and the city overall.”

In her new role, King will assist the direction, planning and evaluation of the Finance Department and will have oversight of the city’s accounting and treasury functions. Some of her many duties will include supervision of staff as well as maintaining the general ledger, account reconciliations,

annual financial and compliance audits, payroll, accounts payable and receivable and serving as Acting Finance Director when designated.

“I am honored to rejoin the Costa Mesa team,” King said. “When I served the city from 2014 to 2016, I had firsthand experience of the staff’s dedication and drive to provide excellent services to residents and businesses. I look forward to working with such a great group again.”

While in the City of Irvine, King managed the city’s treasury functions, maintained and enforced revenue policies and tax ordinances and participated in the city annual budget development process.

Before arriving in Costa Mesa in 2014, King spent two years as a senior accountant for the City of San Juan Capistrano, where she managed the general ledger, accounts payable and payroll and prepared various financial statements and reports.

A certified public accountant, King worked for five years in public accounting before taking a career in municipal government.

King holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Baruch College, City University of New York.

Monday July 16 is the start of the candidate filing period for the city’s

historic 2018 elections

The next General Municipal Election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018. Costa Mesa voters will elect three residents to serve a four-year term on the City Council, one each from Districts 3, 4, and 5. Also, this is the first time Costa Mesa voters will directly elect a Mayor to serve a two-year term.

The nomination period for candidacy opens at 8 a.m. Monday, July 16, and closes at 5 p.m. on Friday, August 10.

Candidates are encouraged to make an appointment with the City Clerk to review all documents. Appointments will be scheduled during regular business hours Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Candidates may also make an appointment to speak to members of city staff to ask questions about city operations and administration. [Click here for a City Services Directory.](#)

For further information, please contact the Costa Mesa City Clerk's office at (714) 754-5225 or visit at 77 Fair Drive, 1st Floor of City Hall.

[Click here for more information.](#)

District Attorney creates way for residents to report problem group homes or rehab

centers

The Orange County District Attorney's Office has just created a Sober Living Home Investigation and Prosecution Team, giving residents the opportunity to report a problem sober living home, addiction and treatment or recovery center incident.

Click [here](#) for more or to report a problem.

The Orange County District Attorney's Office (OCDA) Sober Living-Home Investigation and Prosecution team (SLIP) investigates reports of criminal and civil violations related to rehab industry.

In conjunction with its regulatory, administrative, and law enforcement partners, the OCDA gathers reports, investigates incidents, refers cases to partner agencies and prosecutes cases criminally or civilly when appropriate.

Residents who feel they have been the victim of or have information regarding possible criminal or civil misconduct by or surrounding a rehab or treatment center can [click here](#) to download a form and return it via email to Rick.Bradley@da.ocgov.com or call the District Attorney's 24 hour SLIP TIP line at 714-647-3228.