

Recreation Coordinator Kevin Stoddart receives City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Tom Hatch presented Recreation Coordinator Kevin Stoddart with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet employee recognition event on Thursday Jan. 25.

“As someone who has managed recreation and community services in the past, I know how important Kevin’s work is in regards to teaching kids about water safety and preventing drownings,” Hatch said. “I know I appreciate him, but even more I know his colleagues appreciate him as a hard worker who does the best job for the public we serve.”

Stoddart is a seven-year employee who began with the city as a part-time lifeguard and eventually was promoted to a full-time Recreation Coordinator.

In his role, he ensures the city remains compliant with all local, state, and federal laws governing water safety, and his staff is well-equipped to provide this same level of care during the busy summer months when Aquatics is the busiest.

He works to make sure his staff is trained properly, and his work ethic extends beyond that of his job description.

In January 2017, Stoddart was assigned the teen program, and he saw this as an opportunity to develop his staff and use his critical thinking skills to think of new ways to increase program attendance. And he was successful – in fact, so successful that the program reached new high records in attendance.

While his leadership is evident to both his supervisors and his peers, the same can be said in his interactions with the

general public. His level of customer service is bar none, and again, his critical thinking enables him to provide customers with more than a “no” or a “maybe” – he always looks for ways to accommodate the public to the best of his ability and ensure their experience with the Parks & Community Service is a memorable one.

He is a great contributor to the team and always looks and is willing to share creative ideas to take the department to the next level.

In addition to honoring Stoddart, City Manager Hatch welcomed several new employees and congratulated one on a promotion.

The new employees include, Antonette Penalba, an intern working with the Network for Homeless Solutions, Stacy Daugherty, the city’s new Finance Director, Jonathan Cruz, a Recreation Leader II and Cassandra Gamboa and Yassmin Perez, both Recreation Leader III.

Police Aide Miguel Villana was also recognized as well as Mikaela Soriano and Don Vu, two new interns in Public Services. Finally, City Manager Hatch congratulated Arash Rahimian for his promotion to senior engineer.

Public Services keeps alley refurbishing rolling along

Public Services is halfway complete with the \$1.2 million citywide alley rehabilitation project. The city contracted with Black Rock Construction, who began the project in September 2017.

The project includes rehabilitation of 10 alleyways, which includes 145,000 square feet of new concrete improvements. The new pavement section replaces old asphalt with concrete containing fibrous, which are strength reinforcing additives designed to provide an extended service life under the stresses of passenger vehicles and trash trucks.



To date, the following alleyways are complete: 19th Street Alley located between 19th Street and Flower Street, from Orange Avenue to Westminster Avenue; Flower Street Alley located between Flower Street and Broadway, from Orange Avenue to Westminster Avenue. Several Broadway alleys were also completed including one located between Broadway and Magnolia Street, from Raymond Avenue to Tustin Avenue; another located between Broadway and Magnolia Street, from Westminster Avenue to Santa Ana Avenue; and another located between Broadway and Magnolia Street, from Orange Avenue to Westminster Avenue.

The following alleys are anticipated for completion by summer 2018: Flower Street Alley located between Flower Street and Broadway, from Westminster Avenue to Santa Ana Avenue; Mace Avenue Alley located between Mace Avenue and Ginger Avenue, from Caraway Drive to Wintergreen Place; another Flower Street Alley located between Flower Street and Broadway, from Orange

Avenue to Fullerton Avenue; Sterling Avenue Alley located between Pomona Avenue and Wallace Avenue, from Sterling Avenue to W 20th Street; and another Sterling Avenue Alley located between Pomona Avenue and Wallace Avenue, from W 20th Street to W 19th Street.

City legal action forces Morningside Recovery to shut down three sober living homes

In response to a civil nuisance abatement legal action filed only 21 days ago on Jan. 2 by the City of Costa Mesa, Morningside Recovery LLC has agreed to shut down its remaining three sober living homes in the city, all of which were in violation of the city's sober living home ordinances, and to pay the city \$20,000 in legal fees and enforcement costs.

"This is a great outcome for the residents of Costa Mesa," said Mayor Pro Tem Allan Mansoor. "We are happy that the group home operator decided to work with us and settle this without significant court costs for either party. Hopefully, this sends a message to others that we will strictly enforce our city ordinances and ensure that our neighborhoods maintain a balance that is good for all residents."

The city had taken the abatement action against Morningside, several related entities and the owner of the properties, Barry Saywitz, LP, for failure to apply for and obtain conditional use permits and otherwise comply with in the city's sober living home ordinances. The city had initially taken code enforcement action against six Morningside's facilities within the city. While three ultimately closed,

the properties on Orange Avenue, Peppertree Lane and Pomona Avenue remained in operation.

As a result this settlement, the facilities on Peppertree Lane and Pomona Avenue are required to close immediately, while the one on Orange Avenue is required to close on or before Aug. 31, 2018.

In addition, Morningside agreed that in connection with the closure of its sober living facilities, it will not “curb” residents onto the city streets and will otherwise comply with the provisions of the city’s ordinances relating to eviction of residents.

Police Department staff increases bring needed additions to several specialty assignments

The first deployment shift change for 2018 for the Costa Mesa Police Department has taken place, resulting in some exciting and new additions to several key specialty assignments.

The Traffic Safety Bureau gained a second traffic sergeant position to fill a long-time vacancy. This sergeant position will functionally oversee the department’s traffic officers, part-time traffic aides, and the traffic investigator position. With the breadth and volume of traffic-related issues throughout Costa Mesa, this additional sergeant will provide considerable expertise and oversight to a unit that continues to see growth.

The Police Department also saw expansion of the Community Policing Unit with the addition of a third officer. The Community Policing Unit was relaunched in late 2016 with new priorities and responsibilities to include, first and foremost, concentration on homeless outreach and liaison with the city's Homeless Outreach Team. They also tackle other community issues and provide support to Patrol Services and other units throughout the department. For the first time, the Community Policing Unit will now have officers in the field seven days a week.

The Gang Investigations Unit also experienced milestone growth with the return of a gang sergeant and addition of two gang investigators, for a total of four. Enhanced staffing will allow the Gang Investigation Unit to return to an independently operating unit under the Investigative Services Bureau. Much like the Community Policing Unit, the Gang Investigative Unit has expanded its presence and impact throughout the week.

Costa Mesa contracts with Newport Center Animal Hospital for shelter services

The City of Costa Mesa has entered into an agreement with the Newport Center Animal Hospital and Pet Hotel Suites in Newport Beach to provide animal shelter services and veterinary care.

This agreement is on a temporary basis until a permanent solution to the city's animal care needs can be analyzed and a long-term decision made by the City Council.

The Newport Center Animal Hospital is owned by Dr. Anthony M. Rizk, who has direct experience in shelter medicine and disease control.

“We believe the Newport Center Animal Hospital will offer high-quality care for the dogs, cats and other animals that are lost or abandoned in the City of Costa Mesa,” City Manager Tom Hatch said. “Because Dr. Rizk is experienced in shelter medicine, we think this is an ideal short-term solution for us and for our residents who care deeply about their pets.”

Under the new agreement, a veterinarian will be on site six days a week and on call on Sundays. The city will pay the hospital \$20,833 per month for the shelter services.

“My interest is to provide the best care for the animals that come to my hospital,” said Dr. Rizk. “I am looking forward to working with the city of Costa Mesa and the community to assist these animals. I’m excited to be back to where I started in shelter medicine and to fully utilize my shelter care skill sets.”

The City of Costa Mesa’s newly formed Animal Services Committee will be tasked with researching shelter options and proposing a long-term solution to the City Council over the coming months. The committee was appointed at the Tuesday Jan. 16 Council meeting and consists of seven members and two alternates.

“The City Council formed our new committee because our pets deserve the best care possible, and I look forward to working with committee members to ensure that will happen,” Mayor Sandy Genis said.

The multi-level Newport Center Animal Hospital is fully indoors and climate controlled with animals afforded larger spaces with unique amenities, including cat condos equipped with perches. For dogs, there are play areas as well as calming videos and music.



Most of the suites are plexi-glass enclosures designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and decrease potential injuries to animals.

The hospital is staffed with 20 full-time employees, 10 of whom are caretakers. The employees walk dogs on a daily basis and assist with visual exams and other veterinary care needs. Other services that will be provided at the shelter are:

- Initial entry exams
- Pre-adoption exams
- Pre-adoption spay and neuter
- Vaccinations
- Microchip placement and enrollment
- Free follow-up post-adoption exams
- Veterinary care until adoption
- Daily visual exams

The hospital is also equipped with an in-house laboratory, in-house pharmacy, digital imaging and radiography, ultrasound and digital dental radiographs. The facility features a state-of-the-art surgical suite and offers laser surgery and

therapy.

Under the new agreement, any remaining animals at the Humane Society's Huntington Beach facility will be examined by a doctor of veterinary medicine upon transfer on Sunday Jan. 21 to the new Newport Center facility and will be under the care of Dr. Rizk.

For the short term, the Newport Center facility will not offer adoption services. City staff is currently negotiating with local rescue groups and third party non profits to provide those adoption services until a long-term solution is found.

Dr. Rizk has committed to employing the best practices in veterinary care and in emergency medicine and surgery. He has worked for and volunteered his time and surgical skills across Humane Societies, shelters, and rescues in Los Angeles and Orange County.

In addition, he is well versed in exotic pet medicine and the hospital serves pigs, birds and rabbits with medicine. There is dentistry and oral surgery, as well as soft tissue and orthopedic surgery available.

Dr. Rizk is a member of American Veterinary Medical Association and the Southern California Veterinary Medical Association and is a graduate of the University of Illinois veterinary school. He completed his undergraduate work at UCLA and worked on university research studies focusing on animal behavior and neurology as an instructor and teaching graduate student.

The Newport Center Animal Hospital was established in 1972 and was purchased by Dr. Rizk in 2016. It is located at 1333 Avocado Ave, Newport Beach. [Click here to visit the website.](#)

Dr. Rizk is planning to offer interested community members a tour of the facility in upcoming weeks.

Residents who find missing or injured animals or who believe their animal is lost should continue to call the city's Animal Control dispatch at (714) 754- 5674. For general questions regarding animal control or to report wildlife related issues please call the Animal Control hotline at (714) 754-5311.

Public Services completes Victoria Street wall closures

The City Council received numerous safety concerns from residents adjacent to the wall openings on both Raleigh Avenue and Victoria Street related to transients who sleep and/or loiter, use drugs and alcohol consumption, public urination and graffiti vandalism.

Additionally, concerns were also brought up to city staff regarding the use of neighborhoods containing such wall openings for additional parking for the apartments located on the other side of the wall. Consequently, the City identified seven wall opening locations on Victoria Street and one wall opening location on Fairview Avenue to close off.

Public Services contracted with Horizons Construction Company, Inc. to close off arterial wall openings at these locations. The project consisted of demolishing the existing sound wall obstructions, curb and gutter, and sidewalks; and the construction of new, reinforced masonry-block sound walls, wall foundations, sidewalks, curb and gutter, and other work required to properly transition to the new improvements.

Public Services completes intersection safety lighting upgrades

During December 2017, Public Services contracted with Express Energy Services to upgrade 374 existing intersection safety lights from high pressure sodium to light emitting diode (LED) fixtures.

The fixtures were replaced between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. The LED's will enhance the visibility at the intersections and are more energy efficient and sustainable, thereby reducing the City's electrical and maintenance costs.

The installed LED's are eligible for rebates through the Southern California Edison rebate program. The City anticipates receiving an estimated rebate amount of \$95,145.

City celebrates yet another successful Snoopy House

The 51st annual Snoopy House display ended with another successful year of bringing holiday cheer and joy to Costa Mesa residents and beyond.

The event, which ran from Dec. 14 through Dec. 23, drew about 8,000 total visitors to the display, which sits on the front lawn of City Hall. The provided hot apple cider and took 2,000

photos of children and families posing with Santa Claus.

There were eight performances by Newport-Mesa school groups and 12 non-profit youth groups sold treats raising \$3,000. And this year, a new facility called Brad's Bungalow was added to the display (pictured above) that allowed children to color and write letters to Santa Clause. The bungalow was informally named after longtime city employee Brad Long, who passed away near the Thanksgiving holiday and who was a huge Snoopy House fan. A total of 2,500 letters were written to St. Nick in the bungalow.

Snoopy house would not be possible without the hard work of the city's facilities and maintenance workers as well as the planning and dedication of Dan Baker, Jennifer Christ and McKenna Ewing from the City Manager's office. Special thanks to the four volunteer Santa Claus helpers who pitched in, which included Council Member John Stephens and city employees Andy Godinez, Tony Doderro and Dan Baker.

Costa Mesa residents can fill up sandbags at Fire Station No. 4

With inclement weather expected the City of Costa Mesa will provide residents with sand bags at Fire Station No. 4, located at 2300 Placentia Avenue.

It is a self-service location, and the number of sandbags is limited to 15 sandbags per household.

Maintenance Services staff will also be patrolling potential

flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational.

For more information on sandbags [click here](#).

Costa Mesa takes legal action against sober living operators and property owner

On Tuesday Jan. 2, the City of Costa Mesa filed legal action in Orange County Superior Court against the owner and operators of three large sober living homes operating in violation of the city's ordinances.

"We have enacted the strongest ordinances in the state to regulate sober living homes," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "We filed this legal action to compel compliance with our ordinances and to protect the residential character of our neighborhoods for the benefit of all Costa Mesa residents."

In the legal action, the city is asking the court for a preliminary and permanent injunction and nuisance abatement against the sober living operators, Morningside Recovery, LLC, True Recovery, Inc., the Discovery House, LLC. The complaint states that the operators failed to obtain a conditional use permit and didn't even apply for one.

The owner of the homes, Barry Saywitz Properties One, LP, Barry Saywitz Properties Two, LP and Barry Saywitz as an individual are also named in the complaint. The properties at issue are 1798 Pomona Ave., 2558 Orange Ave. and 2964 Peppertree Lane.

The Pomona Avenue property is being used as a group home consisting of 14-16 recovery beds. The Orange Avenue property is a group home consisting of four, two-story condominiums that house people recovering from alcohol and/or drug addiction, and the Peppertree Lane property is four two-story condominiums that also operates as a group home for people recovering from alcohol and/or drug addiction.

For more information on sober living issues in Costa Mesa and to learn more about the city's sober living ordinances click [here](#).

The city is requesting applications for Community Development Block Grants for Fiscal Year 2018-2019

Notice is hereby given that the City of Costa Mesa anticipates receiving approximately \$900,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

The primary objective of the CDBG Program is “the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low- and moderate-income.”

The scope of CDBG-eligible activities established by HUD ranges from public works improvements to housing rehabilitation and social service programs that primarily

benefit low- and moderate-income persons.

Funding for social service programs is limited to 15% of the City's total allocation for a given year. An estimated \$135,000 may be available for public service grant funding. At this time, the City is accepting applications from interested, tax-exempt nonprofit organizations that provide CDBG-eligible services that benefit low- and moderate-income Costa Mesa residents.

Organizations that want to apply for funding for a particular program may view the application and related instructions on the City's website – www.costamesaca.gov (follow the "City Hall/City Departments" links to Development Services – Housing and Community Development – Links).

The actual application can be obtained by contacting Mike Linares at mike.linares@costamesaca.gov.

Applications will be available beginning December 18, 2017. **Applications must be submitted to the City of Costa Mesa Housing and Community Development by 3 PM, Thursday, January 18, 2018. Late applications will not be accepted.**

Questions regarding this notice should be directed to Mike Linares, CDBG/HOME Coordinator, at mike.linares@costamesaca.gov.

Interim finance director

Steve Dunivent departs after four years with city

After four years with the City of Costa Mesa, Interim Finance Director Steve Dunivent is set to retire at the end of December.

“I love working with Steve Dunivent,” City Manager Tom Hatch said. “He approaches issues as a strong professional but with a unique way of calming any discussions. He will be missed.”

Dunivent began his career in 2013 during a transitional phase, which was expected to last for four months and lasted four years.

During that time, he helped achieve several key milestones, including securing a AA-plus bond rating from Standard & Poors for the Lions Park Projects bond sales, a five-year financial plan and several awards for the city’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Review.

Originally from Wisconsin, Dunivent grew up in Illinois where he received his bachelor’s degree in accounting before beginning his finance career in California. He spent 35 years with the County of Orange before retiring as Deputy Chief Executive Officer.

“My biggest accomplishment is the ability to be trusted by my boss or my bosses and having a positive influence on the people I work with.” Dunivent said. Part of his accomplishments stem from his influences from his family, people from the Bible and pastors.

“My mantra is what would Steve do or say, before I do whatever I do, and it has made me a better person,” Finance Executive Secretary Kathy Ulrich said.

Dunivent has left an indelible mark on the City of Costa Mesa. His colleagues at City Hall agree that he leads with humility and works with relentless drive and in result has provided a great service to the city.

Once retired Dunivent plans to dedicate his attention towards two personal projects and catch up on some reading.

“It’s time,” Dunivent said.