

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.

Presidio Square gets update by Public Services staff

Public Services Maintenance staff completed improvements to Presidio Square.

The goal of this project is to deter vehicle traffic from entering the wrong way or parking in the no parking, red curb area.

The delineation will better define the driving lane and increase safety for pedestrian traffic walking to Davis Elementary School and TeWinkle Park as Presidio Square is used predominantly as a drop off area by school busses and parents for the surrounding schools.

City launches new website to make Costa Mesa's budget more user friendly

The City of Costa Mesa has launched a new interactive website called Open Budget Costa Mesa that will provide residents and city staff with financial data that is easily accessible and understandable.

[Click here to access Open Budget Costa Mesa.](#)

Rather than wading through hundreds of pages of scanned legal and financial documents, residents and city staff can now see financial data contextualized in charts, graphs, and visualizations that are attractive, navigable, and easy to understand. The information is available at various levels of detail and updated monthly.

"We are happy to provide the residents of Costa Mesa with this on-line tool that will make our city budget more user friendly," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "Residents can now create their own charts, graphs and spreadsheets to pursue their own budget research and interests and do it during a set time frame."

[Click here for a video tutorial on how to use this new tool.](#)

To launch the new site, the City of Costa Mesa's Finance and Information Technology department's partnered with Socrata, the leader in making existing government data discoverable, usable, and actionable for public servants and the people they serve.

New JWA tracking site added to city webpage

The city of Costa Mesa has now added a John Wayne Airport flight tracking system to the Airport Noise and Concerns page on the city's main website.

That page can be seen here.

By viewing the flight tracker, website viewers can track arriving and departing flights by airline, altitude, destination and more.

[Click here to see the tracking system.](#)

City officials will continue to monitor issues regarding aircraft noise and increasing traffic reported by residents and will continue to be engaged at the regional level to advocate for protecting Costa Mesa.