

Costa Mesa Fire and Rescue crews to conduct training in Talbert Park to prep for wild land fire season

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue will conduct training exercises June 22 – June 24, 2021 in and around Talbert Park from 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Training is in preparation for the upcoming wild land fire season

CMFR wants to ensure the community is aware of the upcoming training and requests residents and park visitors to be mindful of equipment and preparations occurring by fire personnel.

These annual mandatory training exercises take place in Costa Mesa and countywide to help prepare the firefighters for vegetation fires within and outside city limits.

“As California rebounds from the catastrophic wildfires of 2020 and the worldwide pandemic, the California fire service remains strongly at the tip of the spear on both fronts,” Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano shared. “Our firefighters are preparing hard and will continue to meet this moment in time without pause or hesitation, and working relentlessly to that end.”

There will be approximately 10 to 12 fire personnel present for the training and two to three pieces of apparatus (fire engine, truck, ambulance, or command vehicle) daily. Firefighters will train on trails in South Talbert Park, where there is dense vegetation and moderate terrain features. The training is conducted to promote safety, mitigation, terrain recognition, and, area familiarization while focusing on the fundamentals of wild land firefighting.

The department is conducting the training with full awareness and sensitivity of all environmental impacts and ensures this training will exclude any live burn training modules. The training is facilitated with the assistance of the Orange County Parks and County Park Rangers. In addition, the training will also adhere to County and City requirements and recommendations in regards to COVID19 safety precautions.

For questions please contact Captain Joseph Noceti, Public Information Officer of Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue at (714) 754-5091.

City Council approves budget that restores staffing and services to pre-pandemic levels

The Costa Mesa City Council on Tuesday, June 15, unanimously approved a \$197.9 million Operating and Capital Improvement Program Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22 that restored core services while incorporating key strategies that chart a distinct path towards economic resilience for both near and long-term.

The adopted budget, themed “Charting the Path to Recovery,” provides for strategic investments in Citywide infrastructure, restores staffing and services to pre-pandemic levels, and maximizes Federal stimulus dollars while the global, national and regional economies recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

“In this budget you see the product of the persistence of the

Council Members who were elected in 2018, such as funding for the arts, active transportation, youth programs, and capital improvements on the Westside,” Mayor John Stephens said. “I’m also pleased with the long-term efforts to improve our information technology and city assets such as the golf course as well as investments in police training facilities and fire apparatuses. I am proud to support this budget and thank the budget team, Finance Director Carol Molina and City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison and everyone who played a part in making this budget happen.”

The balanced budget was inspired by the new Mission Statement and five strategic planning goals that were developed at the January 2021, City Council Strategic Planning workshop.

This budget addresses City Council’s mission statement for a safe, inclusive and vibrant City. It provides grants to Costa Mesa families experiencing financial hardship to participate in the Parks and Community Services programs; and fully funds Year One of the Council-adopted Arts and Culture Master Plan

Further, the approved budget includes funding for 530 full-time employees, restores General Fund cuts taken in FY 2020-21, allots for capital improvement projects at \$24.5 million, over half dedicated to streets, information technology improvements, funding to administer Measure Q, and designates over 53% of the General Fund to public safety.

For additional details on the adopted budget [click here](#) to read the staff report.

Irma Garcia is presented with the May City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Public Services Administrative Secretary Irma Garcia with the City Manager Leadership Award for May.

“Irma stepped up during the pandemic to provide continuity of service, dedication and commitment to public service,” Farrell Harrison said. “I so appreciate her dedication to our Costa Mesa community at a time we needed it most. Congrats on a job well done.”

During the pandemic, Garcia assumed the role of Acting Executive Secretary and on many occasions filled in other roles due to absences, vacancies, etc.

She goes over and above the call of duty to make sure the department is represented well. She has also been the “go to” person for Spanish translation needs for various departments.

Throughout her service with the City, Garcia has demonstrated a collaborative spirit, getting along with fellow administrative staff and providing excellent support to the leadership team.

Garcia began her career with the City of Costa in April 2000 as an Administrative Secretary in the Recreation Department.

In July 2004, she joined the Costa Mesa’s Public Services team as the Transportation Division’s Administrative Secretary and in June 2013 as the Engineering Division’s Administrative Secretary.

Applications for Independence Day block party street closure requests due June 22

Applications for Costa Mesa residents who would like to request a street closure to throw a block party on Independence Day are due Tuesday, June 22.

The application packets are available online or can be requested by phone at 714-754-5300. The packets include instructions and rules and regulations governing Fourth of July block parties. Applicants will also need to show proof of liability insurance for the event.

The completed applications must be submitted by 5 p.m., Tuesday, June 22.

To obtain an online application package, visit the City's website [here](#).

For phone requests, please contact the City Hall at (714) 754-5300 or via email at cmrecinfo@costamesaca.gov. Completed applications can be placed in a drop box in front of City Hall or mailed to the Parks & Community Services office on the third floor of City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, Calif. 92626.

Statement on arrest of suspects in the death of 6-year-old Costa Mesa resident Aiden Leos

The City of Costa Mesa joins with the entire community to thank the California Highway Patrol for apprehending the two individuals suspected of killing 6-year-old Aiden Leos on Sunday, June 6.

On Tuesday, June 1, the Costa Mesa City Council voted to add \$50,000 to the reward fund to help find the suspects who shot at the car Aiden and his mother were traveling in on the 55 Freeway.

The gunshot mortally wounded Aiden, who lived in Costa Mesa with his mother.

“It is our hope that Costa Mesa’s reward contribution and surrounding publicity aided in apprehending these two suspects, and that this development brings some comfort to Aiden’s grieving family,” said Mayor John Stephens.

The California Highway Patrol issued a statement that the suspects, Marcus Anthony Eriz, 24, and Wynne Lee, 23, were arrested at their home in Costa Mesa.

Costa Mesa City Council

agrees to add \$50,000 to the reward fund to find killer of Aiden Leos

The Costa Mesa City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday June 1 to provide \$50,000 in reward money to help find the killer of Aiden Leos, the 6-year-old boy who was shot as he rode in his mother's car on his way to school on May 21 on the 55 Freeway.

Aiden and his mother were traveling from their Costa Mesa home to his kindergarten class in Yorba Linda.

"The senseless tragedy of Aiden Leos' death has been felt by the entire community," Mayor John Stephens said. "We want to do what's necessary to bring Aiden's killer to justice, to take him or her off our streets, and to deter others from engaging in this type of dangerous conduct."

Currently, the California Highway Patrol is investigating the shooting and has received multiple tips from the public after releasing a photo of the suspected killer's white Volkswagen Golf Sportswagen. The car was reportedly occupied by a female driver and male passenger.

Costa Mesa's \$50,000 brings the total amount of reward money to more than \$450,000. Last week, the Orange County Board of Supervisors voted to add \$100,000 to the reward fund, taking \$50,000 each from the budgets of Supervisors Katrina Foley and Don Wagner.

Click here for a picture of the suspect vehicle and more information about the reward funds <https://www.aiden-reward.com/>.

Anyone who may have information about the suspects is urged to

call the CHP at 714-567-6000 or email santaanachptipline@chp.ca.gov.

No Residential Street Sweeping the week of May 31 Due To The Memorial Day Holiday

Due to the observation of the Memorial holiday on Monday May 31, there will be no residential street sweeping the entire week as Costa Mesa Sanitary District also observes this holiday pushing trash collection back one day.

This results in residential gutter lines being cluttered with trash cans making it difficult for street sweeper operators to do an efficient job. Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule starting the week of June 7.

The following are a list of task that Clean Street's operators will be conducting next week.

1. City wide alley street sweeping
2. Sweeping of park parking lots and other city owned facilities
3. Accident call outs and special request.
4. Night route sweeping on all arterial streets.

For more information, residents can call the city's street sweeping hotline at (714) 327-7471, which has been updated with this information.

Jason Dempsey receives City Manager Leadership Award for April

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Emergency Services Administrator Jason Dempsey with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of April.

“Since the early days of the pandemic, Jason has been instrumental in our emergency operations and response,” Farrell Harrison said. “As someone with extensive military experience, including special operations forces, I knew we were in good hands right from the start. I am so grateful for all he contributed to our team during these difficult times.”

In August of 2018, Dempsey joined the City of Costa Mesa as the Emergency Services Administrator where he has helped the Police Department obtain over \$1 million in equipment from the federal government, managed the receipt and use of multiple grants, engaged with local and regional stakeholders on behalf of the city.

During ongoing efforts to maintain situational awareness, Dempsey became aware of a novel coronavirus, later referred to as COVID-19, in December 2019, and began tracking its development in January 2020. From January to early February, discussions were held with City Leadership regarding how the virus could impact the City.

On the evening of February 20, 2020, Dempsey was notified by Cal OES that Fairview Developmental Center was to be used as the first non-military quarantine/isolation facility in the Western U. S.

This site was to become active Monday, February 24, 2020 with minimal warning, reassurance, or safeguards in place.

Dempsey provided City Leadership with invaluable information in the first weeks of what became a historic pandemic, enabling the City to secure a rare Stay Order against the CDC, FEMA, and CalOES plans to use Fairview.

Dempsey's early recognition of the severity of these events, coupled with the national and international response to COVID-19, had a significant impact on the City response to the Pandemic and emergency protective measures implemented.

As he assisted with the City's COVID-19 response, he also continued to research ways to improve efficiency and secure resources to ensure we were prepared to serve our community in the event of an unforeseen natural disaster.

He facilitated technology and video updates in the Emergency Operation Center, assisted with civil unrest intelligence and planning during countywide protests, led efforts to be one of the first cities in Southern California with DHS authorization to use Wireless Emergency Alerts, and obtained a Hazard Mitigation Program Grant to assist the City in developing our Hazard Mitigation Plan.

In 2020, Dempsey received the Critical Event Management Award from Everbridge due to efforts to identify and address COVID-19 on behalf of Costa Mesa.

Dempsey began his career in 1997 when he enlisted as an infantryman in the Marine Corps. After September 11, 2001, he deployed as a member of Special Operations Command to Operation Enduring Freedom.

After completion of his third deployment, he moved into the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) field where he was physically embedded with infantry, Reconnaissance and Special Operations Forces (SOF) as well as foreign units such as the

British Royal Marines 40 Commandos.

Dempsey's duties included providing direct EOD support to both the president, vice president and secretary of state visits domestically and internationally.

Dempsey completed 8 deployments, as well as other international dignitary missions, before retiring from the Marine Corps in 2015 as a Chief Warrant Officer.

Following his military retirement and prior to coming to Costa Mesa, Dempsey took a position as an emergency manager with the City of Los Angeles. He spent most of his time at Los Angeles World Airport LAX addressing planning, response, and continuity considerations.

His participation ranged from supporting dignitary visits, interagency exercises with federal agencies such as FBI, CDC, and DHS, to helping develop continuity measures for the LAX EOC and Airport Operations.

Dempsey has two master's Degrees: one in Public Administration from the University of Southern California (USC), another in Homeland Security from the Pennsylvania State University as well as a bachelor's degree in Emergency and Disaster Management. He is a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM) and a Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP).

Costa Mesa partners with Providence, Edwards Lifesciences and the cities of Irvine, Santa Ana and Tustin to open two free mass COVID-19 vaccination clinics



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ORANGE COUNTY, Calif., April 21, 2021 – Providence, a national nonprofit health system, is partnering with Edwards Lifesciences (NYSE: EW), the Orange County-based medical technology company, and the Cities of Irvine, Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and Tustin to open two mass vaccination clinics at one of Edwards Lifesciences' campus buildings in Santa Ana and the Orange County Great Park in Irvine, providing convenient access for residents to protect themselves from COVID-19.

"I would like to thank Edwards Lifesciences and Providence health for giving us another opportunity to get these all-important vaccines," Mayor John Stephens said. "Clearly the more people we get vaccinated the better the chances are that we will put this pandemic behind us and get back to our normal lives."

The Providence clinic at the Edwards Lifesciences site, which was made possible in part by a generous \$500,000 donation from the company as well as significant facility and staffing support, was strategically chosen due to its capacity and central location. The clinic opens today at 3009 Daimler St. in Santa Ana. A second Providence vaccination clinic in partnership with the City of Irvine will open at the Orange County Great Park on Monday, April 26. The drive-through clinic, at 8000 Great Park Blvd., will offer residents convenient access to life-saving vaccines from the comfort of their vehicles.

Vaccines are by appointment only and can be scheduled at myturn.ca.gov or by calling 1-833-422-4255. Free parking is available adjacent to the clinic location at Edwards.

To ensure smooth operation of the sites, the Cities of Irvine, Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and Tustin are providing resources, including public safety and equipment. Through targeted outreach and multi-lingual communications, the cities are also working to overcome accessibility challenges and immunization hesitancy within their local communities.

“Providence is committed to providing Orange County residents with access to the vaccine, particularly our most vulnerable communities that are bearing the brunt of this virus, and our strong partnerships are making that possible. Working with the dedicated staff at Edwards and the Cities of Irvine, Santa Ana, Costa Mesa and Tustin to open these two sites, helps us increase our capacity to deliver more vaccine doses and keep our communities healthy,” said Erik G. Wexler, president, operations and strategy, Providence – South.

Providence has helped lead vaccine distribution in the region, having administered more than 256,815 doses to date. Providence clinical and operations teams will staff the mass vaccine clinics, and through its regional operations, have access to the three U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved

COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna and Janssen (Johnson & Johnson). Following the recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Providence has paused use of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Once fully operational, the two sites together will be able to vaccinate up to 4,000 residents per day, with the ability to expand depending on vaccine supply. All vaccines are administered free of charge.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been over 44,000 diagnosed cases of COVID-19 in Santa Ana, equating to a 13.2% positivity rate. Neighboring cities have faced lower, but still high positivity rates, with Irvine having a 3.6% positivity rate; Tustin, 7.49%; and Costa Mesa, 7.59%. Furthermore, communities of color continue to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

Providence is committed to helping reduce health disparities exacerbated by the pandemic, and recently made an initial investment of \$1.4 million to expand outreach and education and increase the COVID-19 testing and vaccination supply to marginalized communities. In addition to pop-up vaccine clinics in at-risk communities, Providence hopes these two new mass clinics will help support equitable distribution of vaccines across the county.

About Providence Southern California

Providence Southern California is a not-for-profit Catholic health network with 11 hospitals, approximately 90 clinics, TrinityCare Hospice and its TrinityKids Care pediatric hospice, Providence High School, home health care services, eight wellness centers and numerous physician groups in its Southern California Region. Together these ministries, including secular affiliates and some representing other faiths, generate \$7.5 billion in net revenue and have approximately 30,000 employees – called caregivers – and nearly 5,200 physicians on staff.

Providence Southern California is part of Providence, a health system of 111,000 caregivers serving in 52 hospitals, 829 clinics and a comprehensive range of services across Alaska, California, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas and Washington. Providence strives to increase access to health care and bring quality, compassionate care to those we serve, with a focus on those most in need.

Chief Glass announces he will retire from Costa Mesa Police Department in September

After 31 years of service, which includes five years in the United States Marine Corps and a distinguished 26-year career with Costa Mesa, Chief of Police Bryan Glass announced on Wednesday, April 7, that he will retire from his position in September 2021.

Chief Glass, who is highly respected by his peers and the Costa Mesa community, climbed the department's ranks, rising from officer to Chief of Police in October 2019, when he was appointed by City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison.

"I have had a blessed career with Costa Mesa that has been highlighted by the opportunity to lead the organization through 2020, which was a year like no other," said Chief Glass. "I'm grateful for the support I have received from the community, City Council, City Manager, City staff and my family. Time and again, I have been honored and humbled by the support I have received and continue to receive from the

members of the Costa Mesa Police Department. I am proud to serve with the members of the Costa Mesa Police Department and the department's success is a result of their professionalism, resilience, hard work, and dedication."

When Chief Glass assumed his role as leader of the organization in October 2019, his goal was to ensure stability and continuity within the Costa Mesa Police Department and continue the legacy of community policing.

"I'm so proud of the work Chief Glass has done during one of the most challenging times in history," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. "When I appointed him to the role of Police Chief, we needed his steady leadership, extensive knowledge and expertise. Chief Glass has been a guiding light for us during some dark and uncertain times this past year as we faced multiple challenges including a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic and civil unrest. I am honored to work with him, and while I will miss his friendship considerably, I am happy he will be able to retire and spend time with his beautiful family."

In addition to the pandemic and unprecedented civil unrest, Chief Glass also dealt with the fiscal challenges posed by the pandemic.

"I respect and admire Chief Glass," Mayor John Stephens said. "He's been an exemplary Chief during a very challenging time in Costa Mesa. I wish Chief Glass the best in his retirement. He has served our community well over his distinguished career."

Chief Glass placed an emphasis on recruitment and hiring efforts to fill department vacancies and elevated staffing to levels not seen since 2012. He has been an advocate for professional development and succession planning through various promotions and assignment transfers throughout the organization and was instrumental in lobbying for two more

police officer positions that were added to the budget this year.

During his tenure, Chief Glass strengthened and maintained the department's overall collaborations and relationships with an emphasis on community engagement, interaction, and partnerships. He ensured the replacement of several critical infrastructure systems, including a new in-car video and body-worn camera system and the department's current new mobile data computers project.

Chief Glass was originally hired by the Costa Mesa Police Department in October 1995 and attended the Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy. Chief Glass graduated from the academy in March 1996 and promptly began his career as a Costa Mesa Police Officer.

In September 2015, Chief Glass was promoted to the rank of captain. He was assigned as the Support Services Division Captain, overseeing the Investigative Services, Records & Evidence, and Telecommunications Bureaus. In December 2018, he became the Field Operations Division Captain, where he oversaw the Patrol Services, Field Operations Administration, Traffic Safety Bureaus and the department's elite SWAT Team.

Prior to his role as captain, Chief Glass was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in January 2010 and was assigned as the Field Operations Administration Lieutenant. This was followed by assignments overseeing the Telecommunications Bureau, Patrol Services – Area 2 Command, and Professional Standards Bureau. He also served as the SWAT Commander for a time.

His prior roles were as a sergeant assigned to Patrol Services until being selected as the Chief's Adjutant and department Press Information Officer. As an officer, Chief Glass had the opportunity to work a variety of assignments throughout the department. Those assignments included Patrol Services, Gang Unit, SWAT, Master Police Officer & Field Training Officer,

Area 2 Problem Oriented Policing Officer, Narcotics & Vice Detective, and Property Crimes Detective.

Chief Glass is a veteran who served five years in the United States Marine Corps and was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station in Tustin. During his enlistment, he was deployed twice to Okinawa, Japan and once to Somalia, Africa for Operation Restore Hope. In September 1995, Chief Glass was honorably discharged at the rank of sergeant.

Chief Glass has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from Chapman University, a Master of Science in Emergency Services Administration and a Master of Public Administration degree from California State University Long Beach. He is also a POST Command College graduate.

City Manager Farrell Harrison will be hiring an executive search firm to conduct a national recruitment to replace Chief Glass in September. Chief Glass will work closely with the City Manager to ensure a seamless and successful transition.

Chief Glass' last day with the City is anticipated to be Sept. 2, 2021.

Fire & Rescue's Lora Ross presented with City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Fire & Rescue Executive Administrator Lora Ross with the City Manager Leadership Award for the month of March.

“Lora is the glue that holds the fire team together,” Farrell Harrison said. “I know her colleagues and Chief Stefano hold her in high esteem and I appreciate all she does for Costa Mesa and the Fire & Rescue Department. Congrats to her for this well-earned award.”

Because of her reputation for professionalism, her strong work ethic and positive attitude, a colleague recruited her to come work for the City of Costa Mesa in 2004.

Ross is not only dedicated to her roles and responsibilities as the Executive Assistant for the Fire & Rescue Department, she is also a true friend to her colleagues; she genuinely cares for each and every one of them. One of her many notable achievements, of which she is most proud, is her early involvement in the department’s Administrative Intern program.

Ross was instrumental in the program’s development and the departments interns; she continues to manage and lead the interns who are working toward full-time positions within the fire service.

“Lora has continued to play an important role for us and the city, remaining strong and steady in her day-to-day and long term contributions to the department and the city, often under the radar,” said Chief Dan Stefano. “Her commitment, professionalism and loyalty throughout the pandemic have been greatly appreciated, remaining on-site to help support the efficiency and effectiveness of the department’s operation.”

She holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology from National University.

Costa Mesa Mayor John Stephens takes oath of office

On Friday March 26, former Mayor Pro-Tem John Stephens was sworn into the office of Mayor by Second District County Supervisor and former Mayor Katrina Foley.



Stephens, who most recently served as Mayor Pro Tem and later on the Planning Commission, was directly appointed to the mayor position by the City Council at the March 16 meeting to fill Foley's seat after she was elected to the County Board of Supervisors. His first official meeting as Mayor will be at the Council's next regular meeting on April 6.

"I'm honored that the City Council appointed me to serve as Mayor," Stephens said. "We have an active, engaged Council and a talented, hard-working city staff. We have accomplished much, but there is still work to do on important issues like public health and safety, economic recovery, housing, homelessness, and the environment. Together, we will achieve great things and have a lot of fun while we're at it."

[Click here to watch a video of the swearing in.](#)

Mayor Stephens was first elected to the City Council in 2016, achieving the second highest number of votes in a field of seven candidates. He served for four years at-large until November of 2020.

"I am really excited about working with Mayor Stephens," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. "I appreciate his thoughtful manner and dedication to our community and City staff. Our residents and City Council are very fortunate to have him return in the role as Mayor as we hopefully put some difficult times behind us and forge ahead on a path of continued success."

While on the Council, he was named Mayor Pro-Tem in 2018. As Mayor Pro Tem, he was the 2018 Chair of the Association of California Cities-Orange County Homelessness Task Force and is a member of the Orange County Library Advisory Board.

He was a Director on the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency Board ("Toll Roads"). He serves as Council Liaison to the Financial Pension Advisory Committee ("FiPAC"), the Animal Services Committee, the Special Districts (Sanitation, Water, and School), and the OC Fairgrounds. He is also a founding member of the Costa Mesa Early Childhood Coalition.

Additionally, Stephens served on Council Ad Hoc Committees relating to cannabis and Fairview Developmental Center. He has served on Ad Hoc Committees for the Costa Mesa Motor Inn litigation and the City Manager recruitment. Stephens initiated the City's Independence Day Celebration and has brought joy to families of all ages as Santa Claus at Snoopy House for the past five years.

Mayor Stephens was born in Pasadena, and raised in San Gabriel and attended San Gabriel High School. He earned his Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and Marketing from Cal Poly Pomona, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude in 1986. He

received his law degree from the UC Davis Law School in 1989 and was named to the Order of the Coif (top 10%), Law Review and Trial Practice Honors Board.

Stephens has practiced for 32 years and in 2006, he founded his firm Stephens Friedland LLP, which was named the Veterans Legal Institute (VLI) Law Firm of the Year in 2019. It's based in Costa Mesa.

Mayor Stephens and his wife Amy live in Costa Mesa's Mesa Verde neighborhood and have four children: Tom, Nate, Carolyn and Olivia.