

Senior Engineer Shirjeel Muhammad is latest City Manager Leadership Award recipient

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Senior Engineer Shirjeel Muhammad with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet event on Thursday Feb. 27.

“Maintaining public transportation is a big priority for our City Council and residents,” Farrell Harrison said. “I’m grateful to Shirjeel for his dedication to this important issue and his enthusiasm in getting the job done. This is a well-deserved honor.”

Muhammad joined the City’s Transportation Services Division in the Public Services Department in 2018 with over 20 years of experience working on a variety of transportation engineering and traffic signal projects.

Muhammad is currently managing several Active Transportation, traffic signal design projects, and several traffic signal synchronization projects. HE has shown excellent leadership in mentoring and training new staff in the Transportation Services Division.

The division has recently hired new staff to fill vacant positions. With the new staff joining the team, Muhammad encourages teamwork and works closely with new staff to make sure they are trained and have a thorough understanding of transportation related tasks, design, and signal operations.

In addition, he has built great working relationships with Public Services staff in other divisions and other Departments.

His knowledge, skill level and professionalism have been evident from the time he started with the city. He enthusiastically accepts special assignments and looks for ways to improve efficiencies and processes. He responds quickly to public records requests and to risk management requests from the Human Resources Department for information related to the City's traffic signal infrastructure.

Muhammad's responsibilities include management of planning and design of capital improvement projects and the day-to-day management of the City's Transportation Management Center (TMC).

Prior to coming to Costa Mesa, he has worked for public and private sectors in California and worked abroad for several years for the Government of Qatar in Middle East. Muhammad graduated from NED University of Engineering and Technology in Pakistan with a degree in Civil Engineering. He also holds a Master Degree in Transportation Engineering from California State University, Long Beach.

In addition, City Manager Farrell Harrison welcomed several new employees and congratulated three on their promotions.

Jennifer Avila is the new Video Production Aide in the City Manager's Office and Destiny Andrews and Michael Sniezak are a new Interns working in the Development Services.

Nikki Johnson is the new Code Enforcement Officer working in the Fire Department and Arianna Centeno is the new Community Services Leader II working in the ROCKS program at Balearic.

Benjamin Morrison is one of the new Lifeguards working at the Downtown Recreation Center, and Vincent Legaspi is the new Range Master for the Police Department.

In Public Services, Salem Afeworki is the new Energy & Sustainability Services Manager, Iris La is the new Assistant Engineer working in the Transportation Division in Public

Services and Mathew Limon is the new Equipment Mechanic II working in the Maintenance/Fleet services, Ramin Nikoui is the new Assistant Engineer also working in the Transportation Services and Seung Yang is the new Principal Civil Engineer working in the Engineering Division.

Those receiving promotions include Elise Price, who has been promoted to Community Services Leader III and Kevin Stoddard has been promoted to Recreation Supervisor in the Parks & Community Services Department.

Finally, Kevin Henderson has been promoted to Lead Equipment Mechanic for the Maintenance Services Division.

Judge removes Monday court hearing regarding temporary restraining order from calendar

In light of the federal government filing a notice with the court that it no longer plans to place COVID-19 infected Diamond Princess passengers at Fairview, the Honorable U.S. District Judge Josephine Staton has removed a hearing on the matter that was scheduled for Monday March 2 at 2 p.m.

The City will notify the public if there are any other legal proceedings regarding this case.

Federal government abandons plans to use Fairview for Diamond Princess COVID-19 positive passengers

COSTA MESA, CA – In a stunning late development, the federal government has filed a notice with the court that it no longer plans to place COVID-19 infected Diamond Princess passengers at Fairview.

“This is a victory for the citizens of Costa Mesa and Orange County,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “But the government has not promised not to place future infected persons there, so the battle is not over. We will continue to ask the court to prohibit the government from using this completely inappropriate facility for housing people infected with a highly communicable and potentially fatal disease.”

At the direction of United States District Judge Josephine Staton, the City of Costa Mesa met Thursday Feb. 27 with state and federal agencies to attempt to obtain answers to key questions about how the Fairview Developmental Center can safely serve as an isolation site center for asymptomatic COVID-19 positive individuals.

Numerous questions remained after the three-hour meeting, resulting in the city seeking answers to additional questions regarding the scientific and medical basis for the selection of this site. The City and the state and federal agencies’ report on the outcomes of the meeting will be available on the City’s website at costamesaca.gov.

"After the three-hour meeting, we didn't feel any closer to understanding the safety, security or patient plans for FDC and local hospitals in Orange County," said Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley. "The majority of our 120 written questions, plus verbal follow up, were not answered with any specificity of the criteria used to select this non-military base site," she added. "We continue to question medical treatment plans, public health, public safety, the adequate infrastructure of the Fairview Development Center, from seismic safety to mechanical systems, as well as the cost to the taxpayers of Costa Mesa to protect our first responders and our community. Unlike all other 5 existing sites, this center is located in a densely populated neighborhood within walking distance to soccer fields, shopping, the fairgrounds and other major tourist destinations. We also question why the CDC is refusing to follow its own established effective scientifically based protocols requiring home isolation. This protocol protects everyone."

Judge Staton scheduled a hearing for Monday March 2 at 2 p.m. to hear from the parties, and to decide whether to leave her temporary restraining order in place.

The City filed legal action last week against the State of California after it learned federal and state officials were planning to use the Fairview Development Center to house and isolate individuals who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus but do not require hospitalization according to CDC protocols.

"Throughout this ordeal, our top priority is the safety and security of this community and those who live in this region," said the mayor. "We continue to be troubled by the lack of information from the agencies we all need to trust to keep us safe. While the risk of infection is low, this is an international public health emergency and we need answers."

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Additional information about the City's legal filings are available at www.costamesaca.gov as well as the City's social media channels: Facebook @CostaMesaCityHall, Twitter @CityofCostaMesa.

City Manager appoints Police Department veteran Bryan Glass as the new Costa Mesa Police Chief

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison is pleased to announce that acting Chief Bryan Glass will be the City of Costa Mesa's new Police Chief.

"Acting Chief Glass has been a consummate professional from the first day I met him," Farrell Harrison said. "He is highly regarded within the Police Department rank and file. He will be a guiding force in the Police Department as he embodies the crucial leadership qualities we need in the city's team such as creativity, teamwork, responsiveness and innovation. Working with Bryan during the past four months has been a pleasure and I look forward to what he will bring to Costa Mesa and the region in the coming years."

Mayor Katrina Foley expressed her strong confidence in Chief Glass.

"I'm pleased with the decision to promote Acting Chief Bryan Glass to be our new Costa Mesa Police Chief," Mayor Foley

said. "Over the last four months Chief Glass has shown he has what it takes to effectively run a police department. He understands the budget and needs of his department as well as the community. The leadership team as well as our rank and file respect him. He works collaboratively and is responsive to residents. His leadership during the COVID-19 situation demonstrates he is ready. What our department needs most right now is stability. Chief Glass can bring stability back. I look forward to working with him in his new role."

Glass has served in the Costa Mesa Police Department for 24-years. He was originally hired by the department in October 1995 and attended the Orange County Sheriff's Academy. Chief Glass graduated from the academy in March 1996 and began his career as a Costa Mesa Police Officer.

"I am proud of the exceptional work and services provided by the members of the Costa Mesa Police Department," Chief Glass said. "It is an honor to be part of this department and I am grateful for the trust, confidence, and support City Manager Farrell Harrison has given me in the opportunity to be the next Chief of Police for the Costa Mesa Police Department."

"The department is focused on responsiveness and providing quality services to the community," he said. "We are progressively addressing multiple infrastructure projects and succession planning that requires stability and consistency for success."

Chief Glass said one of the highlights in his career has been being a part of the team responsible for rebuilding the department after cutbacks and retirements. Over the last five years, the department has increased its number of police officers and professional staff and strengthened specialty assignments.

Key leaders from the Police Department were happy with the news.

"The Costa Mesa Police Management Association would like to thank City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison for promoting Bryan Glass to Chief of Police," said Lt. Ed Everett, the president of the association. "Chief Glass has a working knowledge of the issues the community and the department are facing. The management association is excited and knows Chief Glass will be progressive in his approach and will keep the department moving in a positive direction. He has the support of the management staff as the department moves forward in addressing city wide issues."

The leaders of the Costa Mesa Police Association echoed that confidence in Chief Glass.

"We would like to congratulate Chief Glass on his promotion," said association President Officer Jerad Korte. "We are excited to continue serving the City of Costa Mesa and developing the future of the Costa Mesa Police Department under the accomplished leadership of Chief Glass."

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, and Traffic Safety Bureaus. Since his promotion to Captain, he oversaw the department's 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 also a veteran and he served five years in the United States Marine Corps and was stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, in Tustin, Calif. 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.

He begins his new role as Police Chief effective immediately.

**Judge agrees to extend
temporary restraining order
preventing the State and
Federal Government from
moving infected Novel**

Coronavirus patients to Fairview Developmental Center

COSTA MESA, CA – A federal judge today ruled that a Temporary Restraining Order preventing the State and Federal Government from moving infected Novel Coronavirus patients to Fairview Developmental Center should be extended for a week, directing the parties to meeting and confer and giving the city an opportunity to present more information.

“We are grateful that the judge saw through the inconsistencies in the federal and state positions, and has extended the restraining order to see if the government can comply with its own protocols for quarantine and isolation of people with serious, communicable and possibly deadly disease., Mayor Katrina Foley said. “While we have nothing but compassion for those who are suffering from this virus, the health and welfare of our community is our top priority. Bringing those infected into this densely populated area is simply the wrong approach.”



The city requested and was granted a temporary restraining order last Friday by the Honorable U.S. District Judge

Josephine Staton, after the city learned that federal and state authorities were considering moving between 30 to 50 infected individuals to Fairview.

City officials contend that transporting persons infected with or exposed to the Coronavirus to any place within Costa Mesa until an adequate site survey has been conducted would be irresponsible. In addition, the city contends the populations of Costa Mesa and surrounding communities puts these infected patients in a much too-densely populated area.

The city contends that any designated site that has been determined suitable for this purpose will need all necessary safeguards and precautions put in place, and the public and local government informed of all efforts to mitigate risk of transmission of the disease.

The City still has not received critical information needed to keep the public safe and to be an effective partner in responding to any emergency arising from the use of Fairview to isolate Coronavirus patients.

Information needed by the city includes:

- The identities of the lead agencies, their roles, and the incident commanders for each agency; operational details of how FDC will be used: when it is expected to begin operations as an isolation location, how long it is expected to be used for this purpose, will the site be expanded, what is the maximum number of patients to be housed, will the number of buildings used on site will change over time, and whether state and federal agencies have considered or identified overflow sites.

- The city is also requesting how information will be shared among the different levels of government, how requests for resources and mutual aid will be made, how media and public inquiries will be handled, and how emergencies will be communicated.

· The city is requesting general safety information that first responders need to be aware of how far the Coronavirus can travel, how far it can be transmitted by airborne means, whether there will be physical barriers preventing access to Fairview, how tall and secure those barriers will be, how far they will be from the buildings and publicly accessible areas, and how the facility will be guarded.

· The city also wants to know the conditions of the facilities and plans to maintain and repair them given the aging and obsolete infrastructure. The City also must know how will the housing, feeding, and movement of Fairview support personnel happen, when will patients be moved on and off the facility, what the testing procedures for patients includes, and protocols for removal to local hospitals, if necessary.

Judge Grants City of Costa Mesa's Request to Halt Use of Fairview Developmental Center As COVID-19 Quarantine Facility

COSTA MESA, CA – Within hours of the filing of an injunction designed to halt plans to use the Fairview Development Center

as a COVID-19 quarantine facility, a federal judge granted the City of Costa Mesa's request and placed a temporary restraining order on this effort until a full plan has been vetted and shared with the city. A press conference is scheduled for 3 p.m. today.

The City of Costa Mesa filed legal action Friday against the State of California and various federal agencies after it learned that federal officials were planning to use Fairview to house and quarantine individuals who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

The restraining order prevents transportation of anyone infected with or exposed to the coronavirus anywhere in Costa Mesa before the Monday hearing at the federal courthouse in Santa Ana at 2 p.m.

"We learned late Thursday that patients could begin arriving as early as Sunday," said Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley. "Filing this injunction was the only way to halt the process to allow everyone in Costa Mesa and Orange County to understand the plans in place to protect the patients as well as our community and the region."

City of Costa Mesa Files Legal Action to Halt Use of Fairview Developmental Center As COVID-19 Quarantine

Facility

UPDATE: Judge Josephine Staton issued a Temporary Restraining Order preventing the transportation of persons infected with or exposed to the Coronavirus (aka COVID-19) to any place within Costa Mesa until an expedited hearing can be held at 2 p.m. on Monday, February 24.

COSTA MESA, CA – The City of Costa Mesa filed legal action today against the State of California after it learned federal officials were planning to use the Fairview Development Center to house and quarantine individuals who have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus.

“The City informally learned that this site is being actively considered as a quarantine facility for patients who are California residents,” said Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley. “Our top priority is the safety and security of this community and those who live in this region. We have received no information regarding how the facility will be prepared, what precautions will be taken to protect those in the facility as well as those who live nearby, and other important planning measures.”

[Click here to read the request for preliminary injunction.](#)

The Costa Mesa City Council took immediate and unanimous action to file a request for a legal injunction to halt the plan. Fairview, which is owned by the State of California, is adjacent to several residential neighborhoods.

The City was not part of the process that led to Fairview’s consideration for this use and has not been thoroughly advised, said the mayor. The injunction is intended to ensure open dialog and a collaborative effort among local, state, and federal agencies responsible for managing the crisis.

While the City understands the need for the Federal Government

to select sites for quarantine, a full and complete explanation of all plans is required. Costa Mesa residents, business operators, and visitors are encouraged to monitor the City's website for additional information.

City Council OKs Police Department Youth Diversion Grant program

The Costa Mesa City Council on Tuesday, Feb. 18, accepted a Youth Reinvestment Grant that will be used by the Costa Mesa Police Department for juvenile diversion programs.

The \$1 million grant will be administered through a partnership between Waymakers and six police departments, including CMPD. Waymakers, a non-profit community based organization, has a 46-year history of working with law enforcement agencies in Orange County. The CMPD, La Habra Police Department, Orange Police Department, Newport Beach Police Department, Tustin Police Department, and Westminster Police Department will be participating in referring juvenile diversion cases to Waymakers.

"Kudos to our police department for taking a proactive approach to help young people," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "One bad decision as a teenager shouldn't destroy your life. Kids deserve the chance to get their lives back on the right track. It's a creative approach to law enforcement and I'm happy that we are the City taking the lead."

The overall objective of this grant is to reduce recidivism rates of juvenile offenders, strengthen protective family factors, limit the impact of juvenile offenses in the community, repair harm to victims and/or the community, and ease administrative duties of the court system and police departments.

Waymakers' Juvenile Diversion Program offers practical, individualized, and cost-effective early intervention, restorative justice activity components such as individual and family counseling, case management, victim-offender mediation, Peer Court, community service and restitution, career and education support, legal awareness, practical parenting skills, drug and alcohol awareness, anger management, service learning projects, truancy reduction, social skills, decision making, and 24-hour help lines and specialized services linkage.

The program is an alternative to the juvenile justice system and gives youth the opportunity they need to get back on track and make things right. The overall goal of diversion programs is to reduce reoffending or the occurrence of problem behaviors without having to formally process youth in the justice system. For more information on Waymakers, visit waymakersoc.org.

"We are proud to partner with Waymakers on providing juvenile diversion services through the Youth Reinvestment Grant Program," said Acting Police Chief Bryan Glass. "These services are an alternative approach to assist juveniles and their families. The program not only benefits the community of Costa Mesa, but communities of the other participating agencies and cities within Orange County."

The funds allocated for the YRG come from the State of California Board of State and Community Corrections and will be used to service the Orange County Central Area. The 44-month grant will be provided through February 2023.

Alice's story: Getting out of hoarding conditions and back with family

Alice was a longtime Costa Mesa resident who lived in uninhabitable conditions until the City and the Network for Homeless Solutions worked together to change her life for the good.

Today, Alice is living in an assisted living facility in San Diego close to her family and children but her journey and eventual success didn't come easy.

Alice lived in a home on the Westside, but years of hoarding turned the residence into an unsafe and crowded place. Indeed, after she took a fall and placed a call for service, firefighters could barely clear a path of travel to help her.

Fire crews explained to Alice, who was a senior, that she needed to address the unsafe living conditions. But they also took it a step further and contacted one of her sons to let him know what was going on. The family told fire crews they had been urging Alice to leave her home and move to more suitable living conditions for several years. They welcomed any help that Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue could offer to convince their mother that it was time to leave her longtime home.

Fire & Rescue leaders didn't stop there. They filed an Adult Protective Services report and contacted Senior Code Enforcement Officer Mike Brumbaugh, who specializes in these types of cases.

Brumbaugh recognized that Alice was at risk of losing her home

and becoming homeless, so he enlisted help from the City's Network for Homeless Solutions and its multiple partners and he laid out a strategic plan to alleviate the hoarding conditions. All the while, Brumbaugh kept in close contact with Alice's three sons.

The family immediately re-launched a conversation with their mover about moving nearer to them in the San Diego area and even made plans to visit with her the next week to accompany her to a medical appointment and assess her living conditions.

Brumbaugh sought the help of Community Outreach Worker John Begin, who is also an employee of Trellis, a faith-based organization that is part of the Network for Homeless Solutions.

Begin, who has an extensive pastoral counseling background, worked with both Alice and her family. As a result of these new trusting relationships, arrangements were made with Alice and her family to hire a tree trimmer to remove excess foliage around her home, which was attracting rodents.

The work had to be approved by Alice, who now felt she had community partners she could rely on and that she was included in a "team approach" to resolve her unsafe living conditions.

Despite cooperating with both her family and the City, Alice was still confused. She called Brumbaugh repeatedly and asked why all the improvements needed to be made.

Alice was concerned about the cost of rent for a place in San Diego. Brumbaugh continually reassured her that cleaning up the property would be a long project, but it was urgent to get her into a safer, healthier environment and avoid having the property turned over to a receiver.

Brumbaugh worked with Alice and her family to set a schedule for completion of the clean up and improvements and Begin continually assured her to keep moving forward with both the

property improvements and preparation for a move to San Diego. They both told Alice that her family cared deeply for her and wanted to help better her life. Alice agreed.

So late last year, she moved out of her longtime Costa Mesa home and into an assisted living apartment in San Diego.

The family is working on repairing both the exterior and interior of the Costa Mesa home and is grateful to all responsible for making Alice aware of her health and safety concerns and the importance of moving her to a new healthier and safer environment.

Thanks to Code Enforcement Officer Mike Brumbaugh, Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue, Outreach Worker John Begin and the Network for Homeless Solutions for helping get a life back on the right path.

For more, please visit our website at www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness.

Costa Mesa Residents Sought to Serve on City Committees

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking residents to serve on the following city committees:

Animal Services Committee: This committee meets monthly and assists with the planning of animal related events, explores and provides recommendations to improve animal services, and promotes pet licensing within the City. The City is recruiting for a 2year term for four (4) regular members and two (2) alternate members. For further information, please contact

Recreation Coordinator Tracy Habiger at (714) 754-5128.

Bikeway & Walkability Committee: This committee meets monthly and assists with the review, update and implementation of the city's Master Plan of Bikeways and pedestrian pathways in order to make recommendations for their improvement to the City Council. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for seven (7) regular members. For further information, please contact Transportation Services Manager Jennifer Rosales at (714) 754-5180.

Cultural Arts Committee: This committee meets monthly and works to promote the City motto, "City of the Arts." The committee works to establish programs, events and information that help residents access the arts in many different venues. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for four (4) regular members. For further information, please contact Recreation Supervisor Ashley Thomas at (714) 754-5052.

Fairview Park Steering Committee: This committee meets every other month and provides advice to the City Council regarding the implementation of the Fairview Park Master plan and impacts of Measure AA on Capital Improvement Program projects, maintenance and activities. The City is recruiting for a 1-year term for one regular member, a 3-year term for one (1) alternate member and for a 1-year term for one (1) alternate member. For further information, please contact Fairview Park Administrator Cynthia D'Agosta at (714) 754-5135.

Finance and Pension Advisory Committee: This committee meets monthly and provides advice to the City Council regarding events and issues which may affect the financial status of the City. It also evaluates annual and long-term pension and financial impacts from changes in CalPERS contribution rates and/or actuarial schedule changes. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for six (6) regular members. Applicants shall have pension knowledge or shall be residents or individuals that conduct business within the City and have a background

that includes experience in securities trading, financial planning, banking, auditing, accounting, or a closely related and relevant field. For further information, please contact Management Analyst Amber Haston at (714) 754-5227.

Historical Preservation Committee: This committee meets monthly and serves to maintain, preserve, educate and promote the city's historical resources. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for four (4) regular members and two (2) alternate members. For further information, please contact Kevin Stoddart at (714) 327-7561.

Housing & Public Service Grants Committee: This committee meets on an as-needed basis and helps to promote community understanding of the community development process and activities funded by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Department (HUD), and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) with a focus on social service grants. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for four (4) regular members and one (1) alternate member. For further information, please contact CDBG Consultant Mike Linares at (714) 754-5678.

Mobile Home Park Advisory Committee: This committee meets quarterly and addresses mobile home park issues and concerns in Costa Mesa. The City is recruiting for a 2-year term for one (1) park owner or his/her representative, two (2) mobile home resident owners, and one (1) independent citizen at-large. For further information, please contact Willa Bouwens-Killeen at (714)754-5153.

Traffic Impact Fee Ad Hoc Committee: This committee meets on an as-needed basis to assist staff on all aspects related to the updating and revision of traffic impact fees. The City is recruiting for a 1-year term for one (1) at-large representative. For further information, please contact Jennifer Rosales at (714 754-5180).

Application Process – Residents who are interested in getting

involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Committee Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website (www.costamesaca.gov/apply). The completed application may be submitted online; mailed to Costa Mesa City Clerk at Post Office Box 1200, Costa Mesa,

California, 92628-1200; emailed to cityclerk@costamesaca.gov; or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa. The deadline is 5 p.m., Monday, March 2, 2020. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the March 17, 2020 City Council meeting.

City notches another sober living victory to collect court costs in Yellowstone case

Costa Mesa continues to collect victories in the landmark Yellowstone case as a Federal Court granted the city's application to recover \$61,488 in costs from plaintiffs for the trial that concluded in December of 2018.

In that case, a jury unanimously rejected claims by the Yellowstone Women's First Step House, Inc., California Women's Recovery, Inc. and the Sober Living Network, that the city's ordinances are discriminatory and violate the Fair Housing Act.

"We are grateful for the judge's decision to award cost

recovery to our city taxpayers,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “It’s unfortunate that the law does not currently allow recovery of attorneys fees too in these cases. Legislative reform is needed to deter these expensive lawsuits. Regardless, we will reinvest those funds in continued efforts to enforce our laws, protect our neighborhoods and patients from unscrupulous sober living operators, and prevail in court so other communities can enact similar laws.”

Since the initial ruling last December, Costa Mesa has won a string of court victories that reinforced the court’s ruling, and last year, Federal Judge James Selna denied motions by the plaintiffs to set aside the jury’s ruling.

The City’s laws, which were amended and strengthened in 2017, regulate sober living home operators in single family neighborhoods, limiting the number of residents to six or fewer and maintaining a 650-foot buffer between non-licensed sober living homes.

The laws also regulate sober living home operators in multi-family zones, requiring a separation requirement to prevent neighborhoods from being converted into institution-like settings.

The City of Costa Mesa was represented by lead trial attorney Jennifer Keller of Keller/Anderle LLP in this victory.

The City implemented the laws to protect the entire community from operators of unlicensed facilities, which exposed residents to dangerous conditions and created public nuisance concerns that affect the City’s quality of life. By doing this, Costa Mesa has led the way to hold these operators accountable, setting the precedent for other cities to do the same.

Tracy Habiger presented with the City Manager Leadership Award for January

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Recreation Coordinator Tracy Habiger with the January City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet on Thursday Jan. 23.

“When her team found out she was selected as this month’s City Manager Leadership Award recipient, they were not surprised,” Farrell Harrison said. “Tracy is one of the leaders in the department, and a role model for many of her peers. Her work ethic, dedication, and commitment to excellence are what make her such a great colleague.”

When the Parks & Community Services Department became responsible for animal services in 2017, Habiger paved the way to establish procedures within the department and developed a strong rapport with contractors to create the new Animal Services Division.

Her efforts in the transition were instrumental to develop and foster a positive working relationship with both the Animal Shelter Operator, Newport Center Animal Hospital, and the Adoption Center: The Orphanage (Priceless Pets Rescue).

Additionally, Habiger is the staff liaison for the Animal Services Committee. The committee, under her direct oversight and leadership, has accomplished nearly all of its goals in less than 18 months of existence, which is a remarkable effort given the novelty of the overall division in the City of Costa Mesa.

Recently, she helped fill a new vacancy at the Balearic Community Center, which houses all of the City's youth programs and took on the additional responsibility of supervising a program that's responsible for more than 1,200 school-aged children.

Her skillset and success at managing multiple projects simultaneously has been evident in her ability to take on new challenges and successfully ensure smooth program operations without any drop in the level of service, despite a significant increase in her volume of work and overall responsibility.

Habiger arrived at Costa Mesa in 2006 as a Recreation Leader II and was quickly promoted to a Recreation Leader IV, then to Recreation Specialist and finally as Recreation Coordinator in 2015.

In addition to honoring Habiger, Farrell Harrison recognized several new City employees and newly promoted employees.

She introduced Susan Price, the new Assistant City Manager, Irene Rosendale is the new Permit Processing Specialist working in the Development Services Department and

Cinthia Contreras and Giselle Gayosso the two new Community Services Leader II working in the ROCKS program.

She congratulated Stacy Bennett who was recently promoted to Deputy City Clerk and

Victoria Castillo who has been promoted to Sr. Community Services Leader assigned to the ROCKS program.