

# County executive Susan Price named as Costa Mesa's next Assistant City Manager

Costa Mesa City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison is pleased to announce she has chosen Susan Price, Director of Care Coordination for the County of Orange, to be the City's next Assistant City Manager.

Price, often referred to by the media as Orange County's "Homeless Czar" quickly rose to the top of a talented pool of 67 candidates vying to be the City's second-in-command. Costa Mesa is one of the very few cities in Orange County to open an emergency Bridge Shelter, and she will be instrumental in its operations and management.

"Susan is a highly respected leader and trailblazer in addressing homelessness in Orange County," Farrell Harrison said. "Her outstanding credentials and past leadership roles make her a great fit for Costa Mesa. I look forward to her joining our exceptional leadership team and working with her to solve some of the City's biggest challenges."

Mayor Katrina Foley echoed that sentiment. "It's great to hear that Susan Price will be joining our Costa Mesa team," Mayor Foley said. "Her diverse experience in finding successful cost-efficient solutions to end homelessness will help us transition seamlessly to oversee our shelter and homeless outreach programs. She also brings needed expertise in developing plans for Veterans housing and identifying partners and funding sources to build a quality workforce and affordable housing for families. Her leadership skills and background in these areas are critical at this time. I'm excited to welcome her to our Costa Mesa team."

Price arrived in the County of Orange in May of 2016 amid much

fanfare as she had previously led successful efforts in the City of Long Beach's Health and Human Services Department to address high-profile issues like homelessness, housing and public health.

During her tenure in Orange County she has designed, developed and implemented 600 emergency shelter beds to help address the encampment crisis, influenced a culture change in the county to effectively address homelessness and created unique strategies to effectively respond to homelessness in one of the largest counties in the country.

"Costa Mesa appealed to me because it's an innovative and dynamic city," Price said. "It was the perfect set of circumstances for me. With my expertise in mobilizing and coordinating a multitude of stakeholders to improve the quality of life for Orange County residents, I can see myself contributing to Costa Mesa in a significant way."

She cited her 17 years of government experience, work in master planning for walkability and bike-ability and her decades of experience in managing homeless services, housing programs and community health initiatives as the reasons why she is a great fit for Costa Mesa.

Price has spearheaded capital improvement projects, tracked legislative priorities and managed complex, grant-based budgets during her career in government.

Price holds a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Psychology and a Master's Degree in Social Work from California State University, Long Beach. Price is expected to begin her tenure at Costa Mesa on Jan. 6, 2020.

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# **Assembly Member Petrie-Norris presents City Council with \$1 million check for Lions Park**

At the Nov. 19 City Council Meeting, Assembly Member Cottie Petrie-Norris presented the city with a check for \$1 million.

The funding is earmarked for the Lions Park Project, an ongoing revitalization effort by the City for the Donald Dungan Library, and the Neighborhood Community Center.

Mayor Katrina Foley expressed her gratitude for the Assembly Member's support.

"We appreciate the collaborative efforts by our Assemblywoman and her team to help us with our budget and legislative priorities," Mayor Foley said. "Helping to fund the new playground at Lions Park will improve the quality of our community and assist our Westside Restoration efforts. I'm looking forward to meeting to discuss next year's budget requests. We finally have an advocate to fight for funding for us in the state budget process."

Petrie-Norris said she was happy to fight for these funds to help the Costa Mesa community.

"With this funding, we believe we're supporting an important project in the community," Petrie-Norris said. "The funding will expand on current resources for the community, including adding onto existing park space. Green renovations will also ensure Lions Park operates under reduced greenhouse gas emissions – a critical goal for all of our communities. We're delighted we were able to work with our Costa Mesa City colleagues to make this happen."

To learn more about the Lions Park Project, please visit the

website at: <https://www.lionsparkprojects.com/>

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## **As storm season begins, sandbags are available for residents at City Hall**

Throughout the winter storm season, the city's maintenance service crews will patrol potential flooding spots to make sure catch basins are clear of debris and operational. Crews are also ready to respond to other weather-related incidents.

Please report flooding issues to 714-754-5250.

Sand bags are available for free to Costa Mesa residents in the southeast corner of the City Hall parking lot at 77 Fair Drive and at the Costa Mesa Sanitary District Maintenance Yard located at 174 W. Wilson St.

Both locations are self-service so please remember to bring a shovel. The number of sandbags is limited to 15 sandbags per household. No commercial use please.

- Also in preparation of the rainy season Maintenance crews will have:
- Flooded signs ready to be placed at known potential flooding locations.
- Additional sand and sand bags ready to be stocked at City Hall and Fire Station No. 4.
- Two portable trash pumps ready to go if required.
- Street sweeping will be canceled if rain is consistent, at this time street sweeping will continue as scheduled.

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# Early College High School Teacher honored by the LA Clippers

Early College High School (ECHS) teacher Mrs. Anne Lawrence was selected as the 2019 Outstanding Teacher as part of the LA Clippers Teacher Appreciation Program. Mrs. Lawrence was recognized for her hard work and dedication to students.

Mrs. Lawrence has greatly influenced students as the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) senior seminar teacher, in addition to her regular role (math teacher or whatever regular teaching assignment she has at the school). She also serves as a California College Application Success Campaign committee member and developed the feature sophomore project, a project where 10th-grade students create a virtual nonprofit organization, to be a community-involved experience.

“Mrs. Lawrence is extremely committed to our students, always willing to do what it takes to ensure their success,” said ECHS Principal Dr. Dave Martinez. “She never ceases to amaze me and we are proud to have her on our team,” he said.

Mrs. Lawrence will be recognized at an on-court ceremony on November 7, 2019, at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

This is the third year in a row that an ECHS teacher has been recognized by the Los Angeles Clippers. Past recipients include Mrs. Treffner (2017) and Mrs. Wurn (2018).

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# Judge's ruling in favor of Costa Mesa's sober living ordinances marks city's fourth victory

The City of Costa Mesa continues to rack up legal victories as Federal Judge James Selna on Nov. 4 denied a motion by California Women's Recovery, Inc. ("Lynn House") and the Sober Living Network, Inc. to set aside a jury's ruling last year that rejected a challenge to the city's sober living ordinances.

"It's time for these sober living home operators to stop fighting our local laws and realize that we are on the right side of history when it comes to protecting both neighborhoods and patients from the industry's bad actors," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "We will continue to enforce our laws. I am positive they will withstand these challenges as reasonable and a model for other communities."

This is the fourth legal victory for the City's laws, passed in 2014, that 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 avoid converting neighborhoods into institutional-like settings. 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.

In September, Judge Selna denied a motion for a preliminary injunction against the city's group home ordinances filed by

sober living home operator SoCal Recovery, a for-profit corporation that operates sober living residences in Costa Mesa.

Judge Selna issued a ruling in July of 2019 that rejected a challenge to the city's group home ordinance by Yellowstone LLC.

Further, a jury unanimously ruled the same thing in December of 2018, rejecting claims by Yellowstone, along with another sober living home operator and an industry trade group, that the city's ordinances are discriminatory and violate the Fair Housing Act.

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## **Code Enforcement Officer Winston Karuga receives the City Manager Leadership Award**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Code Enforcement Officer Winston Karuga with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly employee Meet and Greet event on Oct. 31.

"As a Code Enforcement Officer in our Community Improvement Division, Winston is tasked with taking on tough issues like group homes and illegal dispensaries," Farrell Harrison said. "Winston's work and leadership in this area has been a tremendous achievement in maintaining the high standards expected by the City's residents."

Karuga joined the Costa Mesa team in 2016 as a Code Enforcement officer. In late 2017, along with his regular

duties, he was assigned to investigate illegal sober living/group homes. He understood this assignment was one of the City Council's top priorities.

Karuga hit the ground running and quickly applied his experience and education to this new assignment. Due to his team attitude and work ethic, approximately 83 code enforcement cases were generated that have led to the closure of approximately 20 non-permitted or illegal locations, the compliance of 10 locations, and nine referrals to the City attorney's office for additional review.

Additionally, during this assignment Karuga developed specific investigative techniques, which he then shared with his fellow employees that brought about a higher quality of work within the Community Improvement Division.

Born in Kenya, Karuga was a year old when he moved to United Kingdom with his parents and sisters. He attended Wellingborough International High School and Leicester De Montfort University where he received his associates degree in "Regeneration/Sustainable Communities."

He started his career in 2008 at 18 years old as an apprentice housing officer in Northampton, England. He managed HUD-style housing for the local council (City). He was also involved in many community redevelopment projects as well as projects to help the homeless. He was part of a team that started up a shelter and supported housing projects called the Oasis House.

In addition to honoring Karuga, City Manager Farrell Harrison recognized several new employees and congratulated others on their promotions.

Elisandra Alcala, Spencer Ewertz and Caelan Gambrel are three new Community Services Leader II working out of our Balearic Center and Gilberto Davila is a new Community Services Leader III assigned to the Senior Center.

Jacob Wigal is a new Engineering Technician I working in our Transportation Division of Public Services.

Getting promotions are Kelly Dalton, who has been promoted to Associate Engineer in our Public Services Department and Hector Soriano has been promoted to Assistant Engineer also in our Public Services Department. Carlos Diaz has also been promoted to Sergeant at our Police Department.

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## **Latest ruling on needle exchange proposal is another victory for Costa Mesa and the county**

San Diego Superior Court Judge Joel R. Wohlfeil ruled on Friday Oct. 25, that the Orange County Needle Exchange Program and the State of California cannot operate a mobile needle exchange program in Costa Mesa and other cities in the county unless the state's California Department of Public Health complies with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

This is a great victory for Costa Mesa residents, visitors and businesses, whose safety would have been put at risk with operation of a mobile needle exchange program.

"Protecting the public health includes complying with CEQA," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Evidence of more than 200,000 needles in the public space creates an environmental hazard not analyzed by the state. It's unfortunate that local entities had to expend taxpayer funds to force compliance with laws intended to protect the public. This is similar to the

state's sober living home rubber stamp licensing. We need better oversight from these state agencies."

The most recent ruling comes nearly one year after the Superior Court for the County of San Diego issued a preliminary injunction against both the Orange County Needle Exchange Program and the California Department of Public Health.

It was in July of 2018 that the state Department of Public Health granted the Orange County Needle Exchange Program the right to distribute needles in Costa Mesa on 17th Street, from the intersection of Whittier Avenue and west to the edge of the city boundary at the Banning Ranch property each Wednesday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The state also granted the group the right to operate needle exchange programs in the City of Orange, Anaheim and Santa Ana.

In response to those approvals, the Costa Mesa City Council voted unanimously to pursue legal action and joined those three cities and the County of Orange to seek a temporary restraining order/temporary injunction and to put a halt to the approved mobile needle exchange program.

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

Prior to the state's approval of the needle exchange program, the Costa Mesa Police Department and the City Attorney's Office submitted evidence and statements to state officials that chronicled the substantial risks to public health the

program presents to the Costa Mesa community and asked that the application be denied.

[Click here to see the city's responses.](#)

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## **City wins coveted Helen Putnam award from League of California Cities for SMART Camp program**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison accepted the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence CCS Partnership Intergovernmental Collaboration Award for the summer SMART Camp program from the League of California Cities at its annual conference in Long Beach.

“We are very honored to receive this prestigious Helen Putnam Award from the League of California Cities,” City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. “The camp has touched the lives of thousands of youth and provided the opportunity to enrich their lives . We thank the Costa Mesa City Council and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District board for their support of this joint venture.”

The 2019 SMART Camp served approximately 490 participants. Approximately 266 participants registered for the sports session, and 94 participants registered for the music and 127 kids in the arts sessions.

Registration indicates that students from 4th grade through 8th grade in multiple elementary and middle schools across

Costa Mesa participate in the camp.

The SMART Camp program demonstrates an innovative and replicable example of collaboration amongst the City, the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, and other partners to bring important services to children and families.

“With our SMART Camp, we create summer jobs for young coaches and teachers who participate,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “We provide free summer camps for students in fourth through eighth grade that benefit all families regardless of income and reduce the likelihood of at-risk teen conduct during summer. Engaging students and keeping them active through our SMART Camps benefit the entire community while fostering creativity, critical thinking, logic and communication skills; and in the long run developing well-rounded citizens.”

SMART Camp typically lasts for four weeks from early July to August. Students are introduced to a variety of athletic sports (aquatics, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, soccer, softball, tennis, volleyball and wrestling), music, and art programs (visual 2D, 3D, and acting).

Kirk Bauermeister, Newport-Mesa School District’s Executive Director of Secondary Education and a former principal and coach, said the program has been invaluable.

“The partnership with the city has turned into a collaborative effort between the City of Costa Mesa and the school district,” he said. “This summer, district teachers and coaches will work with close to 1,000 kids from the City of Costa Mesa. Our high school coaches and high school players help out at the camp for community service hours and because of that the youth of Costa Mesa have a high-quality summer sports camp. The variety of sports offerings means many students are exposed to new sports as well.”

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# City Council Seeks Applicants For At-Large Planning Commission Seat

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking interested individuals from the community to serve an at-large seat on the Planning Commission. All applicants must be a registered voter in Costa Mesa.

**Planning Commission** – The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month and advises on planning, land use, and development matters.

The Commission has the authority to review: 1) regulations pertaining to the future growth, development, and beautification of the City with respect to public and private projects; 2) consistency with municipal plans to ensure that future growth and development do not impede upon sanitation, public utilities, and transportation facilities; 3) the location and design of proposed buildings, structures or works; and, 4) the design and improvement of proposed subdivisions of land.

The Commission is the final decision-making body for certain discretionary land-use approvals such as design review, conditional use permits, and land divisions. The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the City Council for Zoning and General Plan amendments. The appointed term will expire February 2021. Applicants must be a registered voter in Costa Mesa.

**Application Process** – Residents who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a

Commission Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website (<http://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; faxed to (714) 754-4942; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto: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., Friday, Nov. 8, 2019. The appointment is tentatively scheduled for the Nov. 19, 2019 City Council meeting.

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## **Support of city's homeless outreach efforts nets Sgt. Clint Dieball the City Manager Leadership Award**

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Police Sgt. Clint Dieball with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly employee Meet and Greet on Oct. 3.

"As someone who grew up in and attended schools in Costa Mesa, Sgt. Dieball epitomizes what it means to serve your community," Farrell Harrison said. "We are so fortunate to have someone like Clint with his vast knowledge and experience in policing as well as his exemplary leadership skills. I'm proud to present him with this award."

Currently, Sgt. Dieball is the Community Policing Unit supervisor overseeing three officers and six park rangers. This team supports the mission of the city's homeless outreach

programs, and vigorously enforces quality of life issues in Costa Mesa.

Since the beginning of the year, Sgt. Dieball's team of CPU officers and park rangers have taken over 1,000 enforcement actions, and have participated in countless outreach encounters with our other city team members and worked closely with the city's Public Services team.

Dieball joined the Costa Mesa Police Department family in July, 1996 as a Patrol Officer.

Dieball is a product of Costa Mesa, having grown up here since 1978. He attended Sonora Elementary, Davis Junior Intermediate and Costa Mesa High School. He also attended Orange Coast College before transferring to the University of Southern California in 1991, and later graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Public Policy and Management.

Dieball was assigned to the South Coast Plaza Detail in 1998, where he and his team were responsible for investigating shoplifting, fraud cases, internal thefts, identity thefts, burglaries and robberies in the South Coast Plaza and South Coast Metro retail districts.

In 2000, Dieball was assigned to the Detective Bureau and worked all aspects of investigations, from property crimes to auto theft and crimes against persons; including domestic violence cases and homicide investigations.

During his time in the Detective Bureau, Dieball went back to school in 2003 and obtained his Master's Degree in Public Administration with a minor in Public Finance, at National University in Costa Mesa.

In 2006, Dieball was promoted to Corporal and became a Field Training Officer, before his promotion to Sergeant in 2008. In 2014, as a Patrol Sergeant, he was asked and accepted an opportunity to work as the Administrative Sergeant as a

collateral duty.

In 2015, Dieball became the full time Administrative Sergeant, with responsibilities including the schedule for all of Patrol, the Field Training Program, Sergeants at Arms for City Council meetings and the police facility. During this time, the police department saw the largest increase in new officers entering the Field Training Program in two decades.

City Manager Farrell Harrison also welcomed several new employees to the Costa Mesa team.

Dasni Ahangama is a new Intern working in the Development Services Department. Nicolas Johnstone is a new Lifeguard working at the Downtown Recreation Center.

In the Police Department, Geren Anders is a new police officer, Lindsey Olson is a new Crime Scene Investigation Supervisor and Lizbeth Ramirez is a new Community Services Specialist

Steven Wang is the new Assistant Engineer working in the Public Services Department.

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## **City Council seeks applicants for District 3 Planning Commission seat**

The Costa Mesa City Council is currently seeking interested individuals from the District 3 community to serve on the Planning Commission. All applicants must be a registered voter in District 3.

**Planning Commission** – The Commission meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month and advises on planning, land use, and development matters.

The Commission has the authority to review: 1) regulations pertaining to the future growth, development, and beautification of the City with respect to public and private projects; 2) consistency with municipal plans to ensure that future growth and development do not impede upon sanitation, public utilities, and transportation facilities; 3) the location and design of proposed buildings, structures or works; and, 4) the design and improvement of proposed subdivisions of land.

The Commission is the final decision-making body for certain discretionary land-use approvals such as design review, conditional use permits, and land divisions. The Commission also functions as an advisory body to the City Council for Zoning and General Plan amendments. The vacancy is due to the recent resignation of a member. The appointed term will expire February 2023. Applicants must be a registered voter in District 3.

**Application Process** – Residents from District 3 who are interested in getting involved in local government are encouraged to complete a Commission Application Form from the City Clerk's Office or from the City's website (<http://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; faxed to (714) 754-4942; emailed to [cityclerk@costamesaca.gov](mailto: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., Thursday, Oct. 3, 2019**. The appointment is tentatively scheduled for the Oct. 15, 2019 City Council meeting.

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# Costa Mesa's Shelter Model Successfully Houses the Homeless

As the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter nears six months of operation, its unique model has successfully transitioned 18 clients from homelessness into permanent housing.

And that's not all. Six additional clients will be opening the door to a new home and a new future by late October.

"Costa Mesa is leading the way with a successful shelter model that helps those experiencing homelessness find housing," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Earlier this year, the City Council took a courageous step to create a Bridge Shelter. It was the humane and right thing to do and the result has been a significant improvement to our community and neighborhoods."

Since its opening on April 5, the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter has been providing shelter and case management services for up to 50 individuals daily.

Clients at the Bridge Shelter have ranged from college students to senior citizens and are from all walks of life including those who have lost everything, have a mental health diagnosis, suffer from addiction or need temporary shelter to get back on their feet.

One of the clients who was successfully housed is Gerald, a 59-year-old Orange County native who has spent most of his life in mental hospitals or living on the streets. Unable to get consistent treatment or access to medication, Gerald unfortunately became a casualty of the system.

After entering the Bridge Shelter, case managers helped stabilize his condition until the proper mental health placement was found. He is now in permanent supportive housing where he is finally receiving proper medical and mental health services.

Gerald was a beneficiary of Costa Mesa's "Housing First" philosophy, which establishes a Housing Plan aimed towards securing permanent housing to end homelessness for all clients.

To carry out the "Housing First" philosophy, the City adopted an operating model where expert shelter operator Mercy House works alongside the City's client case management staff for optimal results.

"This unique model, which separates day-to-day shelter operations from client case management, has undoubtedly been the catalyst to our success," City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison said. "The numbers speak for themselves. Many cities throughout the county, and even the state, are looking to Costa Mesa for advice on how to address the root causes of homelessness while enforcing their anti-camping ordinances."

A key part of the hybrid model is the expectation that each client at the Bridge Shelter is required to meet with their case manager no less than once per week. If they are not following through on the steps of their Housing Plan they run the risk of being exited from the shelter. Fortunately, many clients are exceeding those expectations and meet with their case manager 2-5 times per week, resulting in better outcomes.

Since April, more than 130 individuals, including 11 veterans, have received services from the Bridge Shelter. City case managers have assisted those clients with nearly 1,500 linkages to healthcare, County resources, social services, job connections, legal services, mental health resources, transportation and other services.

By embarking on this plan, the Costa Mesa Police Department was permitted to reintroduce enforcement of the City's anti-camping ordinances on public property. The City was also able to settle with the plaintiffs in the OC Catholic Worker lawsuit that was filed when the County of Orange cleared the Santa Ana River homeless encampments.

"I am proud of the City Council and City staff for all the work they have done to create this successful Bridge Shelter," Farrell Harrison said. "Our City Council's unanimous call to action to address homelessness in the City is money well spent. We still have more work to do, but we are definitely on the right track. I look forward to the opening of our permanent facility next spring and helping more clients end the cycle of homelessness."