

Judge issues another ruling in support of Costa Mesa's group home laws

In yet another victory for the City of Costa Mesa, Federal Judge James Selna denied a motion for a preliminary injunction against the city's group home ordinances filed by sober living home operator SoCal Recovery.

"This is just one more affirmation that we as a City Council have done the right thing for our residents to protect both patients and our residents from unscrupulous operators," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Our law has withstood major challenges so far and we will continue to enforce it vigorously. It has become a model for other communities to follow."

The City's laws, passed beginning in 2014, 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.

SoCal Recovery is a for-profit corporation that operates sober living residences in Costa Mesa, including properties located at 783 Hudson Ave., 208 Cecil Place, 175 E. 21st St., and 157 Del Mar Ave. SoCal Recovery does not currently operate any State- licensed or certified residential care facilities in Orange County.

SoCal Recovery asked the city to alter its application of the ordinances to allow the organization to operate its sober

living facilities. That request was denied. After having its request to operate denied by the city, SoCal Recovery filed suit against the city in July of 2018, alleging the city's group home ordinances violate the Fair Housing Act.

The latest ruling by Judge Selna follows on the heels of his ruling in July and a jury's unanimous verdict in December of 2018 that rejected a challenge to the city's group home ordinance by Yellowstone LLC.

Yellowstone, along with another sober living home operator and an industry trade group, alleged that the city's ordinances are discriminatory and violate the Fair Housing Act.

In the SoCal Recovery case, the city was represented by the law firms of Everett Dorey, LLP and Jones & Mayer.

In the Yellowstone court case, the City of Costa Mesa was represented by lead trial attorney Jennifer Keller of Keller/Anderle LLP.

Street sweeping to be postponed for one week due to Labor Day holiday

Due to the observation of the Labor Day holiday on Monday, there will be no residential street sweeping Sept. 2 through Sept. 6, 2019.

This coincides with the Costa Mesa Sanitary District, which also observes this holiday by pushing trash collection back one day.

This results in residential gutter lines being cluttered with trash cans making it impossible for street sweeper operators to do an efficient job. There should be no parking citations issued during this time.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule the week of Sept. 9.

In lieu of sweeping streets, the following are a list of task that clean streets operators will be conducting next week.

- City wide alley street sweeping
- Sweeping of park parking lots and other city owned facilities
- Accident call outs and special request
- 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.

Bridge Shelter Success: Shirley's story

Shirley is a Bridge Shelter senior client who previously wound up on the streets after a divorce where she found herself having to solve her medical problems and ward off criminals all on her own.

After years of living without a home, Shirley eventually entered the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.

It wasn't an easy entry at first. Shirley twice decided to leave the facility because she wasn't yet ready to move

forward with her housing plan; but, the shelter's outreach and in-reach workers had compassion for her and convinced her not to give up hope for a life inside.

Fortunately for Shirley, she was recommended for a voucher by the Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) and her case manager was able to collect the rest of her documentation to turn into OCHA for her housing voucher.

She is now retrieving and completing the necessary paperwork to get her housing voucher and has sent the documents to OCHA.

Only by stabilizing this client through the availability of a shelter bed and a coordinated and compassionate approach to case management, will he/she be able to complete her housing plan.

Shirley's story is just one illustration of how the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter staff team is going above and beyond to get clients onto a path of hope.

For more information about Costa Mesa's efforts to end homelessness, please visit our website at www.costamesaca.gov/homelessness.

State legislature unanimously votes to name portion of 55 Freeway after Capt. Mike Kreza

On Monday, Aug. 26, the California State Senate approved Resolution SCR 21 to name a portion of the 55 Freeway after

Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Captain Mike Kreza, who was fatally struck by a vehicle while riding his bike off duty in November of 2018.

The freeway will be named the Costa Mesa Fire Captain Michael Kreza Memorial Highway from 19th Street in Costa Mesa to MacArthur Boulevard.

“Fire Captain ‘Ironman’ Mike Kreza will always be in our hearts and now his memory will be imprinted within the gateway to the community for which he loved and served for 18 years,” Costa Mesa Fire Chief Dan Stefano said. “The Costa Mesa fire family is grateful for this incredibly special tribute to Captain Kreza, an honor we will all treasure, most notably his wife Shanna and their daughters Kaylie, Layla, and Audrey.”

Costa Mesa Mayor Katrina Foley also expressed her gratitude for the honor.

“It is so fitting that there will now be a memorial highway that runs through our city bearing the name of Capt. Mike Kreza,” Mayor Foley said. “He was a distinguished Costa Mesa firefighter and much-loved family man, whose character, integrity, and singular commitment to Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue earned him the respect and admiration of his fellow firefighters, the members of the greater Costa Mesa community and the countless other individuals whose lives he touched.”



SCR 21 was first introduced by Orange County state Senators Patricia Bates and John Moorlach, and Assembly Members Bill Brough and Cottie Petrie-Norris were the principal co-authors in the state Assembly. SCR 21 passed both houses unanimously and has gained widespread support statewide, starting at home with the Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue Department, the Costa Mesa Firefighters Association, the City of Costa Mesa, California Professional Firefighters, and the California Fire Chiefs Association.

Once SCR 21 is officially chaptered, the installation process will be discussed and steps to move forward will be set into motion.

ARTventure to mark five years of showcasing local arts and entertaining families

The Cultural Arts Committee along with the Parks and Community Services Department are proud to host the fifth annual ARTventure event.

This free two-day cultural arts event is scheduled for Friday Sept. 6 and Saturday Oct. 7 at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts in the beautiful, multi-tiered glass lobby of the Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall.



This one-of-a-kind juried exhibition of art, will showcase the work of local artists in a variety of media, including but not limited to: oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings, metal sculpture, wood and leather crafting, fashion, photography, fiber art and mixed media.

Friday, Sept. 6 from 5 to 9 p.m. will be an amazing evening filled with art, live music, and refreshments as we celebrate

the incredible talents of local artists with an opening reception and awards presentation. Then on Saturday, Sept. 7 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m families will be treated to a day full of live art entertainment, including musical, theatrical, literary, culinary, and hands-on demonstration.



This free community event is organized in partnership with the City of Costa Mesa and The Segerstrom Center for the Arts, highlighting Costa Mesa's "City of the Arts" motto.

For event details, parking information or to RSVP, visit www.ARTventureCM.com.

Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter Partner Profile: Serve the People

Serve the People is a private non-profit organization located in Santa Ana that provides health care services to people who struggle to find a doctor, dentist, optometrist or a counselor for care. Their mission is to provide the physical, mental, emotional and mentoring needs of the poor, children, sick, needy, uneducated, oppressed and lost people regardless of race, religion or gender.

Last week Serve the People coordinated the visit of a Mobile Vision Clinic at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter where shelter clients were provided free vision tests and glasses.



Partnerships with organizations like Serve the People allow the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter team to better serve those experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa.

Many volunteer opportunities are available at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter. These opportunities are an easy way for the public to take an active role and help create positive change

in the community. For more information, please contact AlyssaS@mercyhouse.net.

Management and Analysis of City Budget Pays off for Haston

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison presented Amber Haston with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet at City Hall on Thursday Aug. 22.

“Amber has proven to be a critical member of the Finance and greater City team,” Farrell Harrison said. “I am very impressed with all she does and appreciate her hard work and dedication and I know her colleagues do as well. Congratulations to Amber for a job well done.”

Haston joined the Costa Mesa team in May of 2017 as a Management Analyst in the Public Services Department. She transferred into the Finance Department in December of 2018.

Upon her arrival in Finance, she has reinvented the role of the Finance Department Management Analyst, focusing on key special projects and performing complex financial analysis and forecasting. Additionally, she continues to provide budget support to all budget liaisons, as well as assistance in forecasting as part of the surplus/deficit projections for FY 2018-19. She served as a critical lead budget team member, and worked with Public Services to develop the Capital Improvement Program budget.

Concurrently, due to her purchasing experience, she was also

asked to step in, along with Purchasing staff, to serve as the Buyer and dedicated Management Analyst for procuring items for the temporary Bridge Shelter in order to meet the City Council goal of opening the shelter by April 2019. Her involvement was instrumental to the successful opening.

Some of her other key responsibilities include developing and managing the Finance Department's budget and procurements, reviewing all City staff reports for fiscal impacts on behalf of the Finance Department, and work on special projects. Some of these special projects include the Citywide Fee Study and Cost Allocation Plan, updating the Capital Asset Needs Ordinance, implementing vendor and bid management software, and preparation and implementation of an electronic signature policy.

Haston attended Colorado State University and holds a bachelor's degree in business management with a specialization in Public and Non-Profit Management.

In addition, City Manager Farrell Harrison welcomed Jacqueline Nguyen as the new Buyer and Louis Li as the new Budget Specialist in the Finance Department.

In Parks & Community Services, Caitlin Huerta and Wendy Pacheco are new Community Services Leader III working at the Senior Center.

Also in Parks and Community Services, Emily Pulaski has been promoted to Recreation Specialist and Amir Ardalan has been promoted to Senior Lifeguard at our Downtown Recreation Center.

Bridge Shelter Success: Samuel's Story

When the Network for Homeless Solutions first contacted Samuel in 2014, it was learned that he suffered from a traumatic brain injury and depression exacerbated by chronic drug use. At one point, Samuel was able to maintain housing in the City and also participate in a variety of odd jobs and volunteer church activities.

But soon things took a turn for the worse. The cumulative effects of his chronic drug use caught up with him. His erratic behavior caused his roommates to evict him. He eventually lost his apartment and became estranged from his family. He became violent and blacked out after excessive drinking and drug use, to the point where others could not be around him.

Fortunately for Samuel, his link to County Mental Health made him eligible to get a housing voucher. After he lost his apartment, he was able to enter the Bridge Shelter and begin working on stabilizing his behavior and getting treatment for his chronic drug use.

Additionally, while his case manager was working hard on behavioral interventions to try to reverse negative behaviors, Samuel also found an apartment unit where vouchers were accepted. Samuel was able to move into the apartment last week with the help of Bridge Shelter partners and NHS members Trellis and Fresh Beginnings Ministries, who emptied out his storage locker and helped to move his furniture.

As staff has found in the past, getting into housing is only the beginning from those facing both mental health and substance abuse challenges. A program offering wrap-around support by both Costa Mesa outreach workers and community

partners is essential for ensuring future housing stability.

Costa Mesa's outreach team is hopeful that Samuel will have many happy years in his new apartment. NHS outreach staff and volunteers are dedicated to ensuring that his housing remains stable by offering weekly visits and assistance in managing treatment and other mental health programs.

Best of luck to Samuel as he continues on this road to recovery. He is just one of many successful clients who is benefitting from the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter and Network For Homeless Solutions, which are changing lives for the better every day.

For more information on Costa Mesa's efforts to aide individuals experiencing homelessness, please visit our website [here](#).

Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter Partner Profile: Community Action Partnership of Orange County

The Community Action Partnership of Orange County works to strengthen individuals and families by providing health services, workforce development and community engagement programs.

The organization also operate a 58,000 square-foot food bank complete with commercial grade refrigerators and freezers capable of handling 20 truckloads of perishable food.

Volunteers receive and package about 26,000 boxes of food each month for distribution to 50 sites across the county.

Fresh Beginnings Ministries and Community Action Partnership have entered into an agreement to provide fresh produce and dry goods every week to Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter residents.

Prior to receiving food from the Community Action Partnership, there were several health code inspections that needed to occur. The Fresh Beginnings warehouse, the kitchen at the Bridge Shelter, and the Senior Center kitchen (where shelter volunteers cook many of the meals) all received A-plus ratings from health inspectors to clear the way for this program to begin.

Over the next two weeks, six volunteers will be trained as certified shoppers by the Community Action Partnership and will be trained on correct procedures at Orange County food banks.

The Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter team is always looking for new ways to innovate, create partnerships and better serve those experiencing homelessness in Costa Mesa. If you would like to be a part of the team and test out your culinary skills, please contact Bill.Nelson@costamesaca.gov.

Additional volunteer opportunities are available and an easy way for you to take an active role and help create positive change in your community. Volunteer opportunities available include preparing and serving meals, hosting games and social gatherings, offering a unique skill set to shelter guests and more. For more information please contact AlyssaS@mercyhouse.net.

A volunteer application is available [here](#).

Not ready to volunteer but still want to help? The city is currently accepting in-kind and cash donations to assist individuals in the community experiencing homelessness. To

make a financial donation or for a list of accepted items please visit here.

Costa Mesa police join federal and state law enforcement in large opioid investigation

The Costa Mesa Police Department was one of just a few local agencies involved in a large investigation into the illegal distribution of opioids beginning in late 2018.

Because of these efforts, a local opioid dealer and his accomplices are facing criminal charges after a major collaborative investigation led by the Federal Department of Justice and a team that included Costa Mesa Police and federal and state law enforcement agencies.

The investigation resulted in the arrest of a Huntington Beach resident indicted for reportedly shipping as many as 2.6 million fentanyl pills nationwide.

[Click here](#) to read the press release from the U.S. District Attorney's Office.

"We are aggressively confronting the opioid crisis through our partnership with law enforcement," Mayor Katrina Foley said. "Thank you to Costa Mesa police and our law enforcement partners for the excellent work to expose and root out these modern day drug dealers in our community. We will continue to hold these individuals who prey on our residents accountable."

Costa Mesa Police Capt. Bryan Glass credited his officers for working to stem this major drug crisis.

“We are proud of the work and efforts our officers continuously put towards these types of crimes, which directly affect our community and the nation,” said Costa Mesa Police Capt. Bryan Glass.

In addition to Costa Mesa Police, the case is being investigated by the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Western Cyber Crimes Unit, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the United States Marshals Service, the United States Department of State, the South Dakota Division of Criminal Investigation and the Chamberlain Police Department.

This successful investigation is one of the many ways the City of Costa Mesa is holding illegal businesses accountable.

In April of 2019 the City of Costa Mesa filed a lawsuit against the manufacturers and distributors of pain medications who are the root cause behind the national opioid crisis.

Mechanic Ian Carter receives July’s City Manager Leadership Award

City Manager Lori Ann Farrell Harrison joined Assistant City Manager Tammy Letourneau to present Ian Carter, Equipment Mechanic III, with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet on Thursday July 25.

“Ian sets a great example as a dedicated and hard-working

Costa Mesa city staff member,” Farrell Harrison said. “As one of only two fire mechanics, he works long hours to keep our fire equipment and city fleet in top condition. I am grateful that he is on our team.”

Carter arrived in Costa Mesa in 2013 and has 20 years of experience as a heavy equipment mechanic. As the primary fire mechanic, he is responsible for maintaining all Fire Apparatus, ambulances and other fire equipment.

When the city lost several mechanics in 2017, Carter stepped up during the staffing shortage to manage the city’s fleet of more than 350 vehicles. Carters’ knowledge, skill level and professionalism was evident right away and he has proven to be an invaluable asset to the City of Costa Mesa and the Equipment Maintenance Section

In addition to honoring Carter, Letourneau welcomed several new employees, including new City Manager Farrell Harrison, and celebrated one retiree leaving after 30 years of service.

In Parks & Community Services, Joe Huynh is a new Senior Community Services Leader. Connor McMurdo is a new Senior Lifeguard working at the Downtown Recreation Center. Venci Vilchis and Yuridia Zarate are two new Community Services Leader II.

Kenneth Tu is a new Police Officer, and Casey Chu and Michelle Nguyen are new Interns working in the Public Services Department in the Transportation Division.

Executive Secretary Corrie Viera is retiring after a 30-year career, in which she started as an Office Specialist I for Public Services Department in the Transportation Services Division. Corrie has a great relationships with all staff she has encountered while working for the City. Enjoy your retirement, Corrie!

Bridge Shelter Success: Cindy's Story

Removing barriers such as substance abuse and legal challenges is something that is happening daily at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter, thanks to the physical and emotional support provided by shelter case managers.

Cindy, a young woman filled with anger, recently received that help at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter.

She had lost her car and wanted to get a job. However, due to recovery issues and loss of transportation, she was overwhelmed emotionally, unable to get work and had no idea how to begin a new 12-step program to help combat her addiction.

Additionally, Cindy was unfocused and dealing with many legal problems and medical issues. She wanted to return to her home state of Washington but was unable to come up with a suitable plan.

With the help of volunteers and thoughtful case management, Cindy was able to go before a judge and have her tickets and citations bundled and reduced.

Cindy is now getting her resume together and getting the confidence to look for work. She has also expressed interest in seeing a counselor to help get her back on her feet.

These simple, yet very important steps, are critical elements of Cindy's housing plan.

Thanks to the caring case manager staff and the shelter operator staff, Cindy is now on a path to a better life, and

is encouraged to continue working towards securing housing.