

City Manager Leadership Award for May goes to Senior Planner Mel Lee

Assistant City Manager Tammy Letourneau presented Senior Planner Mel Lee with the City Manager Leadership Award at the monthly Meet and Greet on Thursday May 23.

“Mel’s quiet professionalism is much appreciated in the Planning Division,” Letourneau said. “As the division recently dealt with staff turnover, he took on difficult projects and helped us with his excellent problem-solving skills and strong work ethic. I am thankful for his leadership and dedication.”

As a Senior Planner, Lee has been responsible for a variety of projects, which included the various master plan approvals at Vanguard University; The Plant in SoBECA; The Triangle; the new Ganahl Lumber, as well as the redevelopment of the old Ganahl site with a new Audi dealership.

He was also responsible for the redevelopment of the Hub on Newport Boulevard, and overseeing the various applications for Medical Marijuana as permitted by Measure X.

While Lee began his tenure in Costa Mesa as an associate planner in 1999, he had previously interned with the city from October of 1985 to January of 1987. He was promoted to senior planner in June of 2015.

Prior to working in Costa Mesa, he worked for the Cities of Commerce and Garden Grove. He holds a bachelor’s degree in urban planning from Cal Poly Pomona and he has been a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners – a branch of the American Planning Association – since 1998.

Letourneau also paid tribute to newly hired employees as well

as those recently promoted.

Stacy Bennet is the new Administrative Secretary working in the City Clerk's Office. In Parks & Community Services, Sativa Chang and Steven Fajardo have been hired as new Recreation Leader III and Enyelber Franco is new full-time Recreation Coordinator at the Senior Center.

Laura Gomez is the department's new Office Specialist II and Katrine Guernick is a new Recreation Leader II assigned to the ROCKs program.

In the City Manager's Office, Paul Mahoney is a new Community Outreach worker currently working at our Bridge Shelter. In the Police Department, Son Duong is a new Police Records Technician

Those recently promoted include Ann Le, who has been promoted Assistant Planner in the Development Services Department, and Marianna Pena who has been promoted to Assistant Recreation Supervisor working at our Senior Center. In the Police Department, Mariela Soto has been promoted to Community Services Specialist.

Costa Mesa officially opens new Donald Dungan library at Lions Park

On a bright, sunny morning on Friday May 24, Costa Mesa city leaders officially opened the new Donald Dungan Library at Lions Park, culminating Phase 1 of a \$36.5 million public works project that broke ground in June of 2017.

“Libraries provide for more than just free books,” Mayor Katrina Foley said during the opening ceremonies. “Libraries serve as valuable public institutions that protect the foundation of a civil society. A library is also an investment in the social infrastructure of our community. Investing in the Lions Park Projects and Donald Dungan library is an investment in the physical space that impacts the way people interact.”



The new 23,615-square-foot library was designed by the Southern California-based architectural firm Johnson Favaro and the construction was managed by Costa Mesa’s Public Services Department and the Tovey/Shultz construction firm.

Assistant City Manager Tammy Letourneau has served as the project manager for the library for the past five years. She pointed out the library was built on time and on budget.

“To be able to open the doors to the public here for the first time is an honor I will hold dear for the rest of my life,” she said.

The LEED Gold constructed building features a main collection with numerous seating and reading areas, a children’s collection with interactive play area, a teen space with exclusive amenities, two rooms with advanced audio visual

presentation capabilities that can be used for conferences or assemblies, two dedicated study rooms with presentation monitors and a Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries work room and showcase.



Phase 1 of the project also includes a one-acre park with 25,000 square feet of programmable grass area. The library is named after Donald Dungan, who was Costa Mesa's first city attorney, serving from 1953 to 1966. He was also a Harbor Court judge for 16 years and served on the Newport Harbor High School Board of Trustees.

The original Donald Dungan Library was built in 1986. The facility is owned by the city and library services are provided by Orange County Public Libraries.

Phase 2 will include a revamped Neighborhood Community Center and significant improvements to the Lions Park playground area.

Upon completion of Phase 2, a total of 225 new trees will have been planted in Lions Park.

No residential street sweeping next week due to the Memorial Day holiday

Due to the observation of the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 27, there will be no residential street sweeping the entire week.

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.

Street sweeping will resume back to normal schedule starting the week of June 3.

In lieu of sweeping streets, the following are a list of tasks 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: George's Story

There have been a number of success stories originating from the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter, this is George's story.

The Community Outreach team was recently given a client referral of a Costa Mesa man named George who was on the verge of homelessness. The staff, who work daily with individuals experiencing homelessness, learned that George would be homeless within the month because he was in poor and frail health. He could no longer adequately cover his monthly rent expenses solely on his Social Security income, and was running out of time and options.

Outreach staff contacted George to let him know of potential solutions, including the options of moving into a room rental situation or taking in a roommate in his current home. George wanted to stay in his home if possible so the Outreach team asked him what qualities he would like in a roommate. The outreach team worked together with the Bridge Shelter case managers to come up with a list of potential roommates.

George's first choice for a roommate was a younger man who was working and helpful and was staying at the Bridge Shelter. The Outreach team arranged a meeting with both men to meet and talk out the details of rent, utilities, and food. After the meeting, they both said it was a go!

Outreach staff worked with our collaboration partner, Trellis, to assist the shelter client with moving costs. Outreach staff also utilized partner resources to start the new roommates off on the right foot by assisting them with getting their cupboards filled with food for a plentiful start on their new lives.

Both men are happy, helping each other out in daily life and

both are secure in their housing!

Book Plans Now to Celebrate the Opening of New Donald Dungan Library

The new Donald Dungan Library in Lions Park is set to open on Friday, May 24 immediately following a ribbon-cutting ceremony that starts at 10 a.m. The public is invited to attend the event that will feature formal presentations, light refreshments, live entertainment and more.

In 2017, the City of Costa Mesa broke ground on Phase 1 of the \$36.5 million Lions Park projects, resulting in a new Donald Dungan Library. Phase 2 will include a revamped Neighborhood Community Center and significant improvements to the Lions Park playground area.

The library is named after Donald Dungan, who was Costa Mesa's first city attorney, serving from 1953 to 1966. He was also a Harbor Court judge for 16 years and served on the Newport Harbor High School Board of Trustees.

The original Donald Dungan Library was built in 1986. The facility is owned by the city and library services are provided by Orange County Public Libraries.

The new 23,615-square-foot library was designed by the Southern California-based architectural firm Johnson Favaro and the construction was managed by Costa Mesa's Public Services Department and the Tovey/Shultz construction firm.

The LEED Gold constructed building features a main collection

with numerous seating and reading areas, a children's collection with interactive play area, a teen space with exclusive amenities, two rooms with advanced audio visual presentation capabilities that can be used for conferences or assemblies, two dedicated study rooms with presentation monitors and a Friends of the Costa Mesa Libraries work room and showcase.

Phase 1 of the project also includes a one-acre park with 25,000 square feet of programmable grass area. Upon completion of Phase 2, a total of 225 new trees will have been planted in Lions Park.

Number of trees at Lions Park to more than double by project's completion

As part of the Lions Park Projects, the city will plant a total of 225 new trees in Lions Park. That number includes a proposal to plant 68 new trees as part of the park's playground improvements. Given that proposed number, which is almost three times the number of existing trees currently in the playground, there will be dense reforestation of the area.

The City's Arborist has recommended some trees for removal because they are either dead or dying, which has caused concerns for some residents.

[Click here to read the arborist's findings and recommendations for removal of 25 trees in the playground.](#)

In addition to the 68 trees planned for the playground, the

city planted 157 trees as part of the Library and Community Center projects for a total of 225 trees. The total trees in place before these projects was 105. Also, the New Zealand Christmas Tree that was planted by the Lions Club will be protected and stay part of this beautiful new park.

City staff is always interested in protecting Costa Mesa's urban forest and is very sensitive to removal of any tree in public right-of-way. Staff carefully evaluates any request for removal of trees and takes necessary steps to mitigate the impact of removal. The City's arborist conducted a detailed inspection of every tree in Lions Park Playground.

Furthermore, instead of planting the standard 24-inch box trees, the city is planting trees between 36 inch to 48 inch box-size to provide immediate benefit of a mature tree.



The completed project will bring a significant benefit to children and residents in the area, reducing issues with falling branches, limbs and tree failures.

Program Manager show mercy to Bridge Shelter Clients

Sara is the Mercy House Program Manager for the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter. She has been a part of the Mercy House Living Centers team since 2011 and has served in a number of different roles, including Case Manager, Community Resource Coordinator, Leasing Agent, Outreach Coordinator, and now as Program Manager.

Growing up, Sara always knew that she enjoyed helping others, and her empathy and dedication were a perfect match for Mercy House. Sara's commitment to assisting those in need is evident in her rapid rise through the organization from intern to Program Manager. She has worked in various programs from providing rental assistance and finding permanent housing for people with disabilities to organizing volunteers and now emergency shelter.

"I have found an even deeper love for my passion here in Costa Mesa since starting at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter and I look forward to continuing this adventure with Mercy House and the City of Costa Mesa."

We are happy to have Sara leading the Mercy House team at the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter and appreciate the hard work and commitment of everyone that is involved at the shelter, including the City in-reach and outreach teams, the Costa Mesa Network for Homeless Solutions, countless volunteers and many community partners.

Thank you Sara and keep up the great work!

Bridge Shelter Success: Sylvia's Story

When the Costa Mesa Bridge Shelter opened in early April, one of the first people to enter was a senior named Sylvia.

Sylvia had previously owned her own business in town along with her children, but she later realized they were not contributing equally to the business expenses and were relying on her for their livelihood. Sylvia decided for her own survival she needed to leave the business and have her adult children fend for themselves.

This decision resulted in Sylvia becoming homeless.

Through the Bridge Shelter and her assigned case manager, Sylvia was able to make contact with an old family friend who she had once helped.

The family friend was able to return the favor to Sylvia by offering her a place to live in another state with a much lower cost of living. Sylvia remained upbeat and positive during her stay at the shelter. She saw it as a safe haven for nearly a month until she was eventually able to secure transportation, via train, to move to her new home.

We are happy to report Sylvia has been reunited with her old friend in the Pacific Northwest and has begun her new life. Congratulation Sylvia!

Notice: OCTA work crews will demolish sound wall adjacent to Moon Park beginning tonight on May 10

What: Crews will demolish a portion of the existing sound wall adjacent to southbound I-405 near Moon Park to create access to the bridge from the freeway. This work will be performed at night. Please be advised that this work may be loud.

Where: Southbound I-405, adjacent to Moon Park.

When: As early as 9 p.m. Friday, May 10 to 6 a.m. Saturday, May 11. This work will be performed concurrently with partial demolition of I-405 bridge over the Santa Ana River and will require freeway lane closures, which can only be done at night. The sound wall will be removed and replaced in its entirety at a later date as part of the project. The 405 Community Outreach Team will notify the community adjacent to the wall before this activity begins.

Note: Dates and times may change due to unforeseen operational factors or inclement weather.

Why: As part of the I-405 Improvement Project, which adds a general purpose lane and a tolled Express Lane facility in each direction, several sound walls will be replaced.

Northbound I-405 Bristol Off-Ramp To Be Closed On May 10

The California Department of Transportation will close the Northbound I-405 Bristol off-ramp this Friday May 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for guardrail repairs.

Signs will be placed to inform motorists of the closure.

Caltrans appreciates the public's patience while it performs this work.

Electronic Changeable Message Signs will notify drivers of the closure. Additionally, construction updates will be available via [Twitter@CaltransOC](https://twitter.com/CaltransOC), [Facebook.com/CaltransOC](https://facebook.com/CaltransOC) and [Instagram@CaltransOC](https://instagram.com/CaltransOC).

The work schedule is subject to change due to traffic incidents, weather, availability of equipment and/or materials, and/or construction-related issues. For more information, you may contact the District 12 Public Information Office at 657-328- 6000.

***Update: Costa Mesa City Council names Lori Ann Farrell Harrison as next City Manager**

After a four-month, nationwide search, the Costa Mesa City Council voted at its Tuesday May 7 meeting to name Lori Ann Farrell Harrison, the Assistant City Manager from nearby Huntington Beach, to be the next City Manager.

"Ms. Farrell Harrison's background in government as well as the private sector is extensive and diverse. Her resume

impresses, as well as her thoughtful, inclusive and collaborative approach to governance,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “Her experience as a finance director for a larger city prepared her for the challenges ahead to ensure Costa Mesa plans for a fiscally sustainable future, with quality services and facilities for the community, and no increased taxes on residents. We look forward to introducing her as our leader to take Costa Mesa to the next level as we work to restore our neighborhoods and parks, improve public safety, modernize, and develop a plan for fiscal sustainability.”



Farrell Harrison, a local government expert with 28 years of experience in the public and private sectors, has been the Assistant City Manager in Huntington Beach since 2017. In that role, she was responsible for coordinating complex initiatives in many aspects of city government with an emphasis on fiscal sustainability, transparency and process improvement. She also worked with the City Manager in the daily oversight of the city’s 10 non-elected departments including police, fire and public works.

Additionally, she has served as chief advisor to the City Manager, the seven-member City Council and the elected City

Attorney, City Treasurer and City Clerk. She has also been a leader in citywide homelessness efforts, and has led successful labor negotiations with the city's eight employee associations covering 987 full-time employees.

"It is an extraordinary honor and privilege to be offered the position of City Manager for the City of Costa Mesa, known for its cutting-edge initiatives, commitment to public safety, emphasis on transparency in government, and dedication to the arts," Farrell Harrison said. "I am truly excited about the opportunity to put my 28 years of experience to work in leading such an excellent organization under the direction of Mayor Foley and the City Council."

Prior to her role as Assistant City Manager, Farrell Harrison served as the Chief Financial Officer for the City of Huntington Beach for seven years, overseeing a total budget of \$344 million. She was instrumental in helping the City reduce its unfunded liabilities, bringing certain retirement benefits essentially to 100 percent funded status during her tenure.

She is also attributed with achieving a "AAA" rating for the City from Fitch Ratings due to her leadership, financial acumen and expertise.

She previously served as the City Controller, and later as the Chief Financial Officer, for the City of Long Beach, the sixth largest City in California. In that capacity, she was responsible for working with 23 department heads in managing a City Budget of \$2.3 billion.

Earlier in her career, she worked for the State of New York and later the City of New York's Administration for Children's Services overseeing the \$2.0 billion budget for child protective, adoption and day care services.

In addition, she currently serves on the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners, the five-member governing body for the Port of Long Beach. The Port of Long Beach is the second

largest container port in the country, responsible for \$180 billion in international trade.

Her leadership skills have resulted in numerous awards including the Association of California Cities-Orange County Chapter's Golden Hub of Innovation Award and the California Society of Municipal Finance Officers' Innovation Award for her plans to reduce pension-related unfunded liabilities. She was also nominated for CFO of the Year by the Orange County Business Journal in 2016.

Farrell Harrison holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and a Bachelor's Degree from Barnard College of Columbia University. She is fluent in Spanish. In her free time, she enjoys skiing and snowboarding and traveling with her husband and their four teens.

Farrell Harrison anticipates starting her role as City Manager by the first of July.

Costa Mesa joins forces with state cannabis enforcement authorities to shut down illegal operation

On Thursday, March 28, 2019, the Cannabis Enforcement Unit, which is made up of the city's Code Enforcement Unit, the Costa Mesa Police and the Bureau of Cannabis Control, served a search warrant on "Costa Mesa Beach Buds," an unlicensed cannabis dispensary located in Costa Mesa.

The Bureau of Cannabis Control is part of the state's Department of Consumer Affairs.

The search warrant was served at 1651 Placentia Ave., which resulted in the seizure of over \$1.4 million in cannabis products.

The enforcement action is part of the city's ongoing partnership with the state to track down and close these illicit facilities.



“Illegal dispensaries harm and burden surrounding business owners and taxpayers,” Mayor Katrina Foley said. “Allowing them to illegally operate in the city creates an unfair advantage over our lawfully permitted green zone businesses. We are so grateful for the efforts of the Bureau of Cannabis Control to address illegal dispensaries in Costa Mesa.”

All commercial cannabis activity in California requires a state-issued license from one of the state's three cannabis licensing authorities.

Costa Mesa Beach Buds is one of seven dispensaries the city has shut down for illegal operations. [Click here](#) for a list of dispensaries currently under investigation.

Selling cannabis goods without a state license is a violation of state law.

To file a complaint against illegal activity, click here
– https://bcc.ca.gov/consumers/file_complaint.html.

To check and see if a cannabis retail location is licensed,
visit www.CApotcheck.com.