

Residents sought to serve on city committees, deadline is Feb. 19

The Costa Mesa City Council wants you to get involved and is seeking residents to serve on the following city committees:

Bikeway and Walkability Committee: This 15-member committee assists with the review, update and implementation of the city's Master Plan of Bikeways. The committee, which meets monthly, also assists in the evaluation of bikeways and pedestrian pathways in order to make recommendations for their improvement to the City Council. It has three (3) regular member vacancies, for one-year terms. For further information, please contact Raja Sethuraman at (714) 754-5032.

Cultural Arts Committee: This 11-member committee, which meets monthly, works to promote the city's slogan, "Costa Mesa City of the Arts." The committee supports local cultural arts programs and brings art awareness to the residents of Costa Mesa by establishing programs, events and initiatives to better help residents access the arts. It has three (3) regular member vacancies and one (1) alternate member vacancy, all for two-year terms. For further information, please contact Justin Martin at (714) 754-5065.

Historical Preservation Committee: This 11-member committee, which meets monthly, serves to maintain, preserve, educate and promote the city's historical resources. It has five (5) regular member vacancies and two (2) alternate member vacancies, all for two-year terms. For further information, please contact Justin Martin at (714) 754-5065.

Finance Advisory Committee: This 11-member committee, which meets monthly, provides advice to the City Council regarding events and issues that may affect the financial status of the

City. It has nine (9) regular member vacancies for two-year terms. For further information, please contact Kathy Ulrich at (714) 754-5243.

Housing and Public Service Grant Committee: This 11-member resident advisory committee, which meets on an as-needed basis, 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). Additionally, the committee rates and ranks applications for CDBG public service grants, ultimately developing funding recommendations for City Council consideration. It has four (4) regular member vacancies, two (2) for two-year terms and two (2) for one-year terms. For further information, please contact Mike Linares at (714) 754-5678.

Pension Oversight Committee: This nine-member committee, which meets monthly, focuses on long-term pension and financial matters as it pertains to the city's CalPERS retirement, unfunded pension obligations and unfunded medical liabilities. It has one (1) regular member vacancy, for a one-year term. For further information, please contact Ray Hull at (714) 754-5227.

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; faxed to (714) 754-4942; or hand-delivered to the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, 77 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa.

The deadline is 5 p.m., Friday, Feb. 19, 2016. Appointments are tentatively scheduled for the March 15, 2016 City Council

meeting.

For further information regarding committee appointments, please contact the City Clerk's office at (714) 754-5225 or cityclerk@costamesaca.gov.

Ranch Afterschool Program recognized for excellence

Costa Mesa's Parks and Community Services Department has been chosen for the 2015 California Park & Recreation Society Award of Excellence for Environmental Stewardship for its Ranch Afterschool Program.

The Ranch Afterschool Program's collaboration with the OC Fair & Event Center, the City of Costa Mesa, and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, aids in providing a unique after school experience in which students focus on agricultural concepts like gardening, livestock, and leather working.

"The Parks and Community Services Department is honored to receive the California Parks and Recreation Society's (CPRS) Award of Excellence in Environmental Stewardship, for the Ranch After-School Program," said Ashley Ocasio, the city's assistant recreation supervisor. "Children enrolled in this unique program learn first-hand what it means to be a farmer through lessons learned by cultivating farm land, gardening, raising and caring for livestock and creating leather crafts."

The students have a hands-on experience caring for animals on the Farm which includes: chickens, sheep, pigs, goats, llamas, cattle, and horses. They learn responsible animal care by cleaning stalls, grooming, and exercising the animals.

Additionally, the Farm dedicates land for each student to create and maintain an individual garden. Students' gardening responsibilities include planting, watering, fertilizing, weeding, inspecting for pests and harvesting their plot.

Agricultural education helps children learn about healthy food choices and teaches them different ways to access fresh fruits and vegetables. Most importantly, students begin to understand the deep impact agriculture has in their lives past, future and present.

"This free program is a true collaboration and would not be possible without the support of the Orange County Fairgrounds," Ocasio said. "This strategic partnership provides many Costa Mesa youth the opportunity to experience an unique after-school program, in which the focus is on agriculture and farming"

The California Park & Recreation Society awards program recognizes outstanding achievement in the areas of facility design, park planning, marketing and communication, and community improvement and programming through demonstrating the principals of resourcefulness, execution, accomplishment and alignment with the parks and recreation mission.

The presentation of awards will take place at the annual Awards Recognition Banquet scheduled for Friday, March 11, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency Long Beach, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

City joins with South Coast

Plaza officials to kick off Lunar New Year

Mayor Steve Mensinger and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Righeimer and members of the city staff attended South Coast Plaza's opening celebration of the Chinese Lunar New Year on Wednesday Feb. 3 at South Coast Plaza.

Deemed the "Year of the Monkey," this is the seventh year that South Coast Plaza has chosen to celebrate the event that was headlined by the shopping center's head of international marketing, Werner Escher.

Also attending from South Coast Plaza were Anton and Sally Segerstrom, David Grant and Debra Gunn-Downing as well as dignitaries from around the county, including county supervisor Lisa Bartlett and Michelle Steel.

The festivities included samplings of traditional Chinese cuisine and formal Chinese dragon dancers.

Hearing slated for Saturday on Fairview Developmental Center closure

On Saturday Feb. 6, state officials will hold a public hearing on the future of the Fairview Developmental Center from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The hearing will take place at the center's auditorium at 2501 Harbor Blvd.

[Click here for the agenda.](#)

City staff will be in attendance at this important meeting, and the City Council voted in October on its recommended uses for this land. The city's planning staff has conveyed that to state officials verbally and in this letter.

The recommendations are to be incorporated into the city's General Plan this year.

The city is recommending a mix of residential, open space and institutional uses, complementary to the Costa Mesa Country Club Golf Course and surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The city is also recommending that the maximum residential density for Fairview would be 15 to 25 dwelling units per acre, with a maximum number of 500 residential units for the entire site.

Additional housing units may be built, as long as they meet the density bonus provisions pursuant to state law.

At least 25 percent of the site will be dedicated to open space. The inclusion of institutional uses—such as public and private recreational facilities, sports parks, community centers, public facilities, and other similar uses—are also being recommended.

Le and Brown are named new sergeants for CMPD

The Costa Mesa Police Department has two new sergeants today as veteran officers Bang Le and Jimmy Brown were sworn in Thursday outside Chief Rob Sharpnack's office.

"We couldn't be prouder of these two individuals," Chief

Sharpnack told the crowd, which included Mayor Steve Mensinger, several top ranking officers and police staff and family members who had gathered in support.



Le is a Garden Grove native who joined the department in 2000 and was the first in his family to pursue a career in law enforcement, Sharpnack said.

Brown was born and raised in Orange and also started his law enforcement career in the year 2000, first joining the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He became a Costa Mesa officer in 2005.

http://cityofcostamesanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MVI_5210.mp4

Le thanked the chief and his fellow officers for entrusting him and Brown with these leadership roles.

"It's something we take seriously and we promise we won't let you down," Le said. "It's a privilege and honor to carry on the great traditions of this department."



Brown also welcomed the challenge.

“I look forward to leading the next generation and moving forward with the department,” he said.



During the badge pinning, both men had their children do the honors, with Brown having his daughter pin his badge and Le had both his son and daughter take part in the ceremony.

Sharpnack pointed out how important the families are to these officers and others in the department and he thanked them for their support. And he reiterated that these promotions are symbolic of where the Costa Mesa Police Department is headed in the future.

“Our department is on the rise,” he said. “And we are going to seek excellence in all we do.”

Former CMPD Chief Neth receives Mayor's Award

Mayor Steve Mensinger presented former Costa Mesa Police Chief Roger Neth with the Mayor's Award at the Tuesday Feb. 2, 2016 City Council meeting.

Mensingher noted that Neth was an instrumental figure in the formative years of the Police Department, bringing innovative technology and other best practices to the Costa Mesa Police Department.

Not only was he one of the first three officers hired by the City, but he is credited as being the very first officer on patrol.

And with 22 years at the helm of the Department, Neth is Costa Mesa's longest tenured Police Chief.

Below is a video clip highlighting Neth's career.

“I'd like to thank Mayor Mensinger for this honor tonight,” Neth said. “I'm very proud to receive it.”

Neth said the city's first Police Chief Arthur McKenzie, who urged the officers to follow three principles: be innovative, be progressive and above all be professional.

“We were a new police department so we didn’t have to change old methods,” he said Tuesday night. “We built on those three principles.”

Plastic Eggs, Candy and Small Toys Needed for Easter Egg Hunt for Marine families

The city of Costa Mesa and the Costa Mesa Military Affairs Team are currently seeking donations of medium and large size plastic eggs, individually wrapped pieces of candy and small toys for the children of the City’s adopted 1st Battalion 5th Marine Regiment.

The collected candy and small toys will be used to stuff the plastic eggs for the children at the Marine unit’s annual Easter Egg Hunt held at Camp Pendleton.

Since the 1/5 Marines are deployed and will not be able to celebrate Easter with their families, the Easter Egg Hunt will help provide a festive event for the children.

Donations of age-appropriate small toys will be greatly appreciated. Suggestions for toy donations include yoyos, toy soldiers, ball and jacks, stickers, erasers and bling rings which will fit inside of plastic eggs.

The age groups this year are:
2 years and under

3 to 5 years

6 years and over

Donations can be dropped off at City Hall in the foot locker located in the lobby until Friday, March 18, 2016.



For further information, please contact Dan Baker in the CEO's Office at (714) 754-5156.

George Cortez presented with the CEO Leadership Award for January

George Cortez, a nine-year city employee and maintenance supervisor, is this month's honoree for the CEO's Leadership Award, presented at the monthly Meet and Greet.

Along with his able staff, Cortez is responsible for sports field preparation, maintenance and renovation; irrigation management; special event support; including the Fish Fry,

Snoopy Holiday Display, sports tournaments, and Concerts in the Park; maintenance and repair of all park buildings; planting, fixing or renovating all the landscape and site furnishings in the city's 29 parks.

He also is charged with keeping up with the high use of specialized facilities such as the skate park and Bark Park. He interacts very effectively with the Parks and Community Services staff on a nearly daily basis.

Cortez, who began his career with the city in 2007, balances the constant requests for service from the public, the daily maintenance challenges and administering contractors working in his parks with all the other components of a busy park maintenance operation.

He always has time for his staff and tries to meet their individual needs, while responding to high priority requests from the Council, CEO's Office and management. He has shown a dedication and commitment to providing the highest quality service possible to the residents and visitors to the City of Costa Mesa.

In addition to Cortez, 10 new employees were recognized at the Meet and Greet as well as three employees who were promoted.

Bark Park closed because of windy conditions

Due to unsafe wind conditions and falling trees, the Bark Park is closed until further notice.

City staff is working as quickly as possible to clean up the

fallen trees and branches.

Please call (714) 754-5300 for additional information.

Costa Mesa TV staff produce video on El Nino prep

The CMTV staff have created this new video to let members of the public know how the City of Costa Mesa is preparing for El Nino 2016.

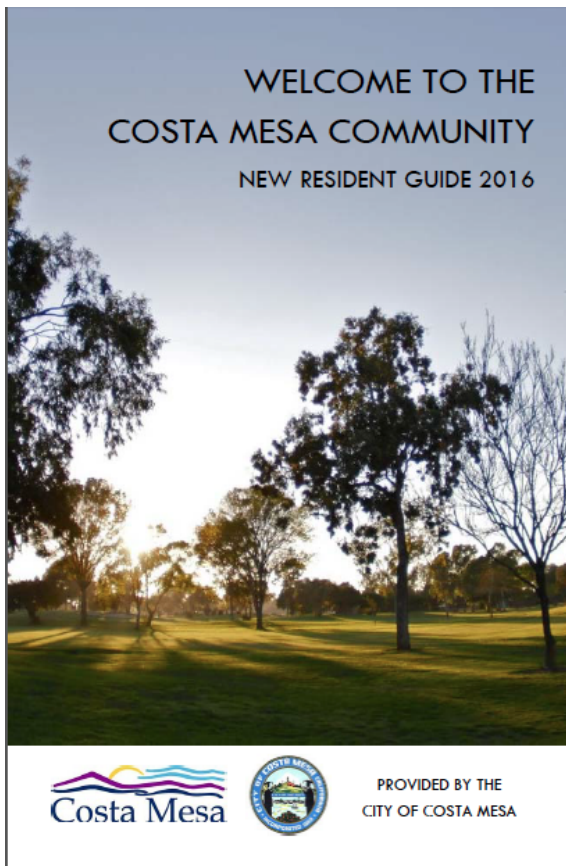
From the City's Public Services and Fire Departments to the Costa Mesa Sanitary District and Mesa Water District, residents and businesses in Costa Mesa can be assured that their local public services are as prepared as possible for El Nino 2016.

New guide highlights city services and resources for new Costa Mesa residents

For those residents who may be new to the City of Costa Mesa, the City staff has recently completed a new publication that will give them a crash course on city services and resources.

The annual New Resident Guide for 2016 is available in printed

form at each floor of City Hall and other key locations throughout Costa Mesa. To see an electronic version of the guide, [click here](#).



The guide provides basic facts about the City of Costa Mesa along with contact information for elected officials as well as city government services.

In addition, the guide provides lists and dates of community events, maps and locations of local parks and athletic fields and other local resources such as the Chamber of Commerce and Conference and Visitor's Bureau.

For additional copies, questions or comments about the New Resident Guide please call 714-754-5098.

Assistant CEO details challenges city faces on homeless issues

Costa Mesa Assistant CEO Rick Francis told attendees of the monthly Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Boost that the city is working hard through community outreach and with the help of clergy and others to address the problems of homelessness here.

"We are willing to do our fair share and we will never back down from that," Francis told the group gathered at the Costa Mesa Country Club on Thursday morning. "But if every city took care of their own, this problem would be a lot easier to manage."

Francis noted that recent counts of homeless in Costa Mesa show a 45 percent increase in that population, but his presentation highlighted the success of the city's outreach efforts and the work of the Network for Homeless Solutions, a city-sponsored group that includes, clergy, code enforcement, police and city outreach staff.

For example since 2013, the city was able to house 122 homeless people and reconnect 31 people with family members. From June of 2015 through December, volunteers clocked upward of 880 hours helping the homeless.

He pointed out to the audience several of the factors that lead to homelessness, including the price of housing, underemployment, a dramatic increase in drug use and abuse, especially heroin, and sober living home operators who have clients that drop out and go back onto the streets.

Changes in legislation to address prison overcrowding have also led to problems as criminal offenders spend less time

incarcerated and are free to commit crimes more quickly.

Joining Francis at the breakfast were members of the city's Network for Homeless Solutions, including Bill Nelson of Fresh Beginnings Ministry, Ian Stevenson of Trellis and Muriel Ullman, the city's homeless liaison. City CEO Tom Hatch and Fire Chief Dan Stefano also attended the breakfast.