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.