



# Staff Report

## City of Manhattan Beach

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Cohen and Members of the City Council

**THROUGH:** Geoff Dolan, City Manager *GD*

**FROM:** Cathy Hanson, Human Resources Director *CH*

**DATE:** May 5, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Introduction of New Employees, Employee Promotion and Service Awards; Recognition of Employee of the Year, Police Officer of the Year and Firefighter of the Year

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the following:

- 1) Introduction of new employees from the Fire and Public Works Departments;
- 2) Recognize employee promotions;
- 3) Presentation of commemorative certificates and pins to employees who have completed 15 or more years of service to the City and
- 4) Recognition of City Employee of the Year, Police Officer of the Year and Firefighter of the Year.

**FISCAL IMPLICATION:**

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended actions.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City has a tradition of welcoming new employees by introducing them at Council meetings. This gives new employees an opportunity to meet the Council members and Department Heads and experience firsthand how Council meetings are conducted in the City. This tradition includes recognizing promoted employees and presenting commemorative certificates and pins to long-term city employees.

The City also recognizes employees who have performed outstanding work and provided excellent service to the citizens of this community. The City's Employee Recognition Program selects the Employee of the Year among city employees who have been chosen as employees of the quarter during the year. For 2008, the Employees of the Quarter were: John Anderson, General Services Coordinator, Patricia Schilling, Administrative Assistant to City Manager, Cleo Vasquez, Executive Secretary and Gilbert Gamboa, Senior Civil Engineer.

The Police Officer of the year is selected by the Police Department's Rewards and Recognition Committee while the Firefighter of the Year is selected by the Manhattan Beach Firefighters' Association.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Fire Department:**

**New Employee**

John Weber is our new Battalion Chief. Prior to becoming a firefighter, he spent 4 years in the United States Marine Corp. He worked at the Bakersfield Fire Department for 21 years. He was a Chief Officer for a year and Company Officer for 11 years specializing in Technical Rescue, Truck Operations, Training, Haz Mat and Weapons of Mass Destruction/Terrorism. He developed a Senior Safety program to educate seniors about fire safety, aided in rewriting the evaluation forms for the Fire Department, taught NIMS/SEMS to city personnel and managed and conducted training academies for new recruits.

He is currently the Vice President of the Southern California Training Officer's Association, Senior Instructor for State Fire Training in Confined Space Rescue Technician and qualified to instruct Haz Mat, Trench Rescue, Command and Management courses. He is one of the principal developers of a State Fire Training course called "Command and Control of a Rapid Intervention Crew (RIC) Deployment". This material will be used throughout the state to teach firefighters the procedures to follow if a firefighter goes down or comes up missing during a fire.

John obtained his Bachelor's degree in Business Marketing from Cal State Bakersfield where he was also pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Administration. Due to his employment with the City, he now plans to obtain his Master's degree from the University of Southern California.

**Firefighter of the Year**

Fire Engineer James Muth started his career with the City of Manhattan Beach as a Firefighter/Paramedic in 1997. He was promoted to Fire Engineer in 2002. He previously was employed by the Alhambra Fire Department in Los Angeles, as well as the Central Pierce Fire Department in Seattle, Washington.

Engineer Muth has a total of 22 years in the Fire Service. Currently he is the department's Paramedic Coordinator, Vice President of the Fire Association, and a key member of the Engine Committee and Purchasing Committee. Engineer Muth holds a Fire Officer Certification and is an Acting Captain. Jim is currently on the Fire Captain's promotional list. He continues his education and training in anticipation of becoming a Fire Captain for the City of Manhattan Beach.

**Employee Promotion**

The following employee is unable to attend tonight's presentation but the City wishes to recognize him for his accomplishment: Steve Fairbrother was promoted from Firefighter/Paramedic to Firefighter Engineer.

**Police Department**

**Police Officer of the Year**

Officer Hank Crossett was nominated Police Officer of the Year due to his unselfish support and dedication to help fellow Officer Mark Vasquez combat his illness. Officer Crossett spearheaded a community-wide fund raising effort to offset medical costs for Mark's numerous treatments. He made phone calls on his own time, reached out to the community for assistance, utilized

media, solicited volunteers and local businesses to get the word out. He conducted a charity bowling event and silent auction and contacted various police organizations throughout the county and beyond. Officer Crossett was able to raise more funds than his original goal. He was also able to secure an initial grant so Mark can begin his needed treatments.

During his treatments, Mark was enduring bouts of nausea while commuting to Arizona by car and Officer Crossett came to the rescue again and solicited a donation from a private pilot who agreed to fly Mark to and from his treatments. Officer Crossett routinely stays in contact with Mark and his family. His compassion and selfless actions serve as an example for others to emulate.

### **Employee Promotion**

Verdesiah Nasralla was recently promoted to Police Records Manager. She joined the Manhattan Beach Police Department as the Community Services Officer Supervisor in 2006.

Verdesiah has met the goal of motivating the PACS personnel with enhancing productivity, increasing enforcement efforts and training for personal development and growth. She has served as a member of various departments and City committees and continued to strengthen her knowledge and understanding of her daily job functions. She revisited the job specs outlined for PACS personnel in respect to daily job responsibilities in an effort to evaluate staff performance, and allow individuals to experience more understanding of required expectations and review growth in job performance and accountability.

Verdesiah has been successful in promoting team building and good morale within the PACS work group and providing a high level of enhanced service in parking and animal control for the Manhattan Beach Community. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration from the University of Phoenix where she graduated with honors.

### **Service Award**

Paul Ford, Police Officer, 15 years of dedicated service.

### **Public Works Department**

#### **New Employee**

Steve Finton is our new City Engineer. Steve is a licensed civil engineer and comes to us with a wealth of engineering experience and local South Bay professional experience. After graduating from Cal State Fullerton, he began his professional career with the Riverside County Flood Control District. After moving to the South Bay, Steve served the City of Gardena as Associate Civil Engineer, Cerritos as Assistant Civil Engineer, Torrance as Acting Deputy Public Works Director and City Engineer, then Public Works Director for the City of El Segundo. Prior to joining the City of Manhattan Beach, Steve was a Senior Civil Engineer in Culver City. Steve's first day of work was April 20<sup>th</sup> and he has rolled up his sleeves and joined the crew.

#### **Promotion to Sr. Civil Engineer and**

#### **Employee of the Year**

Gilbert Gamboa started his career in our Public Works Department as an Assistant Engineer in 2002. He was promoted to Associate Engineer in 2004 and to his current position as Senior Civil Engineer in January 2009.

Gil has been the City's acting Utility Undergrounding Coordinator. The Utility Undergrounding program is a highly complex project involving aspects of design engineering, construction, requiring interfacing with and overseeing the activities of three major utility companies, Edison, Verizon, and Time Warner Cable. It is also a highly contentious issue among the City's residents, with strong and vocal supporters on both sides, the management of which requires a great deal of tact, patience, public relations skills, and an unflagging dedication to customer service. Prior to Gil taking over these duties, the City employed a full-time employee whose sole responsibility was to handle the utility undergrounding program. Gil has somehow managed to take on this project in addition to his responsibilities as a Senior Civil Engineer, which include the design and construction management of Capital Improvement Projects such as the Manhattan Beach Boulevard Improvements, 2007-08 Water Main Replacements and City Yard Bulk Material Storage Area Cover. He also manages to provide assistance to the public, other departments and agencies dealing with situations that require his attention. He is well-liked and admired by his co-workers. He was Employee of the Quarter and was voted Employee of the Year in recognition of his accomplishments.

**Service Awards**

The following employees are not able to attend tonight's presentation but the City wish to recognize them for their dedicated service:

Juan Price, Maintenance Superintendent	20 years	Public Works Dept.
Bobby Dobson, Maintenance Worker III	15 years	Public Works Dept.