SPOTLIGHT ON TRANG NGUYEN, FINANCE DIRECTOR

Trang Nguyen took over the reins as the City’s new Director of Finance in April after almost five years as RPV’s Deputy Finance Director. Trang previously worked five years for the City of El Segundo as the Accounting Manager, a year at the City of Downey as the Assistant Finance Director, and 10 years with Torrance Unified School District as the Accounting/Finance Manager. Trang took a few moments out of her busy schedule to answer a few questions about herself and her role as the Finance Director.

What led you to into a career in Finance?

I’ve always known my strength is in numbers so accounting and finance were logical career choices. I would have to credit my career to RPV’s former Finance Director Deborah Cullen. Deborah took a chance on me when she offered me the Accounting Manager position in El Segundo in 2010 and then again gave me the opportunity to be the Deputy Director here in 2016. Without Deborah’s mentorship, there wouldn’t be a Director Nguyen today.

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BOLT INTO THE BLUE

If you glimpse a delicate blur of blue wings fluttering by as you hike a City trail, it may just be the delicate, elusive and resilient Palos Verdes blue butterfly. A kaleidoscope of endangered Palos Verdes blue butterflies, thought to be extinct until a sighting in 1994, were released in mid-April in the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve. This beautiful and historic release followed approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of a permit providing for federal protection of the blue butterfly that is included in the City’s Natural Community Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP). The plan details a number of areas where the blue butterfly can be safely released. Their release is part of a multi-year effort to re-introduce the species to the Palos Verdes Peninsula. When the Palos Verdes blue butterfly was rediscovered, the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy, America’s Teaching Zoo at Moorpark College, the U.S. Navy, U.S. Defense Logistics Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Urban Wildlands Group worked cooperatively to create a captive rearing program to bring the butterfly back from near extinction.

CARING AND COMPASSION IN THE TIME OF COVID

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges to communities throughout the United States and the world. The resilience, can-do pragmatism, and neighborly attitude of RPV residents has been front and center during these turbulent times. In the months since the initial LA County and State “Safer at Home” orders were issued, City residents have consistently found creative and compassionate ways to express their strong sense of community. Below are a few tips for staying safe, informed and involved, because we are truly all in this together.

Attend a virtual City Council Meeting:

City Council meetings have been held primarily via Zoom since March. Meetings are on the first and third Tuesdays of the month starting at 7 p.m. and will be live-streamed on the City website at rpvca.gov and televised on RPVtv Cox 53/Frontier FiOS 58. Visit rpvca.gov/participate for information on how to participate in public comment.

Contact the City Clerk’s office at 310.544.5217 or at CityClerk@rpvca.gov with any questions. If you require a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in a meeting, please email adarequests@rpvca.gov.

Show Your Appreciation

The City encourages residents to support our first responders, health care workers, essential workers and local restaurants, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. City Staff and Council members have delivered meals to grocery workers, firefighters, healthcare workers and others during the pandemic to express our gratitude for their service. Find out how you can help at rpvca.gov/coronavirus.

Meals from RPV restaurants were delivered to the following sites:

- Harbor-UCLA Medical Center Pathology Department
- Torrance Memorial Medical Center Emergency Department
- Lomita Sheriff’s Station
- L.A. County Fire Stations No. 53, No. 83 and No. 106
- Ralphs
- Smart & Final
- Both RPV Trader Joe’s
- L.A. County Fire Station No. 106

Blood donations are down dramatically since the onset of COVID-19. The American Red Cross has implemented additional precautions to ensure the safety of its donors and staff. For more information, and to find a blood drive or donation center, visit redcrossblood.org or call 1.800 RED CROSS (1.800.733.2767).

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What’s Not:
- Our wonderful parks and open space, while following social distancing and COVID-19 pandemic. Residents and park visitors are encouraged to enjoy our reopened parks and open space, while following social distancing and COVID-19 restrictions.

What’s Open:
- Beaches, parks and trails, including the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve and Rancho Point Vicente.
- The dog parks at Eastview Park and Rancho Caninos.
- Outdoor restrooms.
- Basketball courts.

What’s Not:
- All park programming remains canceled until further notice.
- Indoor and outdoor sports.

**CURRENT STATUS OF PARKS, TRAILS, AND BEACHES**

**What’s Open:**
- Park turf areas
- Walking paths
- Most trails and nature reserve areas (check trails.rpvca.gov for up-to-date information on temporary trail closures and trail circulation plans)
- Paddle tennis courts at Ladera Linda and the tennis court at Upper Point Vicente/City Hall
- The dog parks at Eastview Park and Rancho Caninos (Upper Point Vicente/City Hall)
- Outdoor restrooms
- Basketball courts

**What’s Not:**
- Instructional courses and group sessions/private events
- Playgrounds
- Baseball and soccer fields
- Park buildings

**RE-OPEN, OH MY!**

PARKS AND TRAILS AND BEACHES

**Summer 2020**

- Indoor and outdoor sports
- Basketball courts
- Outdoor restrooms
- Paddle tennis courts at Ladera
- Most trails and nature reserve areas

**Tips To Avoid Computer Fraud**

- Check for misspellings or wrong domains within a link (for example, type them into your browser).
- Do not open attachments or click links within emails from senders you don’t recognize.
- Do not provide your username, password, date of birth, Social Security number, financial data, or other personal information in response to an email or robocall.
- Always verify the web address of legitimate websites and manually type them into your browser.
- Check for misspellings or wrong domains within a link (for example, an address that should end in a .gov ends in .com instead).

**CRIME BUSTER CORNER**

**MAKE SURE CRIME DOESN’T PAY OR COST YOU**

When it comes to crime prevention, follow the scouting motto—Be Prepared!

Public safety is a top City priority, and the City is committed to help you become educated, prepared, and connected.

**Neighborhood Watch**

Consider joining your local Neighborhood Watch. The RPV Neighborhood Watch has been running for over 28 years as an active community-run organization. Contact Gall Lorenzen – Founder of the Neighborhood Watch – at rpvnw6ik.netcom.com for more information or to join.

If you would like to organize your own neighborhood watch or learn additional information on public safety programs, please contact the City Manager’s Office by emailing Administrative Analyst Shane Lee at sllee@rpvca.org.

**COVID-19 Scam Alert**

Be aware of COVID-19-related scams and hacking attempts:
- Individuals and businesses selling fake cures for COVID-19 online and engaging in other forms of fraud
- Phishing emails from entities posing as the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Malicious websites and apps that appear to share virus-related information to gain and lock access to your devices until payment is received.
- Seeking donations fraudulently for legitimate or non-existent charitable organizations.

Criminals will likely continue to use new methods to exploit COVID-19 worldwide.

If you think you are a victim of a scam or attempted fraud involving COVID-19, you can report it without leaving your home through a number of platforms:
- Contact the National Center for Disaster Fraud Hotline at 866.720.5721 or via email at disasterfraud.gov
- If it’s a cyber scam, submit your complaint through https://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx

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**GREEN CORNER**

**YOU’VE READ IT, NOW SHRED IT!**

The next City/EDCO document/paper shredding event is on Saturday, October 17, 2020 from 8 am to 11 am. Mark your calendars. More information will be provided in the next newsletter. If you cannot wait until then, there are several other options such as on-site shredding companies where you can drop off your material, stores that have tamper proof shred console boxes, and mobile shredding services.

**RECYCLE AND WIN $250!**

In your July EDCO billing you will find the “Recyclers of the Month” entry card. If you recycle your yard waste in the green container(s) and/or your paper, newspaper, cans, bottles and glass in the blue recycling container(s), fill out the entry card, affix a stamp and mail it in. At each City Council meeting two lucky verified recyclers will win a check for $250 plus a personal emergency preparedness kit! You could easily be one of the 48 lucky winners. If you pay online, please see EDCO’s online link that is available in July and follow instructions. This is one way the City thanks RPV residents for recycling. If you need more blue or green recycling bins, call EDCO at 310.540.2977.

**SUNNY DAYS AHEAD**

Did you know you can get 50% or 100% of your electricity from solar power without having to install solar panels? Southern California Edison’s Green Rate program gives you the opportunity to purchase more of the energy you use from renewable sources. If you’re unable to install solar panels on your roof, this might be a good solution to support the environment.

On behalf of Green Rate customers, SCE purchases additional solar energy to meet the needs of Green Rate participants from California developers within SCE service territory.
- You may elect your level of participation (50% or 100% of energy usage)
- Your energy costs are estimated to be 1.26 cents higher for each kilowatt hour (kWh) of usage that is served on the Green Rate. For the average bill of $100 per month (usage of 506 kWh), this equates to an extra $3 per month at 50% participation and $6 per month at 100% participation.
- You may de-enroll from the Green Rate at any time without penalty.

SCE’s Green Rate Program is Green-rate Energy certified and meets the environmental and consumer-protection standards set forth by the nonprofit Center for Resource Solutions. Learn more at www.green-rate.com.

To enroll, visit on.sce.com/3f8FNmH or call 1-866-701-7867.

**COVID**

(Continued from page 1)

**Use Reliable Sources for COVID-19 information:**

LA County Department of Public Health: publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus
California Department of Public Health: cdph.ca.gov/covid19
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): cdc.gov/COVID19
Sign up for “Notify Me” city updates at rpvca.gov/notify
Follow the City on Nextdoor, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Sign up for emergency alerts from Alert SouthBay by:
- Texting “alerts” to 888-777, which returns a link to register
- Follow the City on Nextdoor, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- Registering online at alertsouthbay.com

Sign up for emergency alerts from Alert LA County at https://lacounty.gov/emergency/alert-la/

**COVID by the Numbers**

As of June 9, 2020

- LA County Cases: 5,822 Deaths: 2,707
- City of RPV Cases: 96 Deaths: 11

For a list of cases broken down by city, demographic characteristics, and settings, visit: http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/locations.htm.
LOCAL ELECTION SCHEDULED AND NOMINATION PERIOD FOR CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES

The City of Rancho Palos Verdes will hold its General Municipal Election on November 3, 2020, for two City Council seats. The nomination period for candidates will begin on Monday, July 13, 2020, and will close on Friday, August 7, 2020, at 4:30 p.m. There is an extension period of five days if an incumbent fails to file nomination papers by the deadline.

During the nomination period, election manuals containing all of the necessary paperwork will be available from the City Clerk’s Office. Please contact the City Clerk’s Office at (310) 544-5208 to make an appointment if you are interested in being a candidate for City Council. To be eligible, a candidate must be a registered voter and a resident of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.

Full details on the November election including candidate information will be available in early July 2020 on the City’s website at http://rpvca.gov/elections or by contacting the City Clerk at cityclerk@rpvca.gov.

HELPING OUR COMMUNITY!

#RPVtogether

RPVtv supports local business

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on local businesses throughout California and the United States. While RPVtv has a relatively modest commercial presence, local businesses have been hard hit. Below are local, State, and Federal resources available to City businesses.

**COMMUNITY**

RPVtv can be reached by email at rpvtv@rpvca.gov.

**EDUCATIONAL**

RPVtv was founded by the City more than 20 years ago and is a local educational access channel that provides the citizens of Rancho Palos Verdes with the public’s appreciation for frontline workers with the new and exciting programming and continue producing special public broadcastsed the portraits of hundreds of seniors graduating from the community while wearing masks and sanitizing equipment and microphones.

In June, RPVtv began airing a special tribute to the Class of 2020 and of social distancing during production. Staff turned their living rooms into production sets to interview guests for RPVtv’s longest running shows, “RPV City talk” & “Around The Peninsula.”

**ADDITIONAL STATE AND FEDERAL RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES**

State and Federal resources are currently available to help small businesses financially impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

**U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Economic Injury Disaster Loans**

SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loans offer up to $2 million in working capital to assist small businesses in paying for fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable and other financial obligations and operating expenses. The interest rate is 3.75% for small businesses and 2.75% for non-profits.

Applicants may apply online at disasterloan.sba.gov/elia. The deadline to apply is December 18, 2020.

**SBA Capital Loans**

SBA also works with lenders to provide loans to small businesses. The agency doesn’t lend money directly to small business owners, but sets guidelines for partnering lenders to make it easier for small businesses to get loans. For more information go to sba.gov/funding-programs/loans.

**California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (iBANK)**

iBANK’s Disaster Relief Loan Guarantee Program is currently available to small businesses. Financial Development Corporation (FDC) partners throughout the State are assisting businesses in securing a 95% guarantee on bank loans of up to $1 million. Go to ibank.ca.gov/small-business-finance-center for more information.

**TAX ASSISTANCE**

Employers experiencing a hardship may request a 60-day extension of time from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) to file their state payroll reports and/or deposit state payroll taxes without penalty or interest. For more information, call 1.888.745.5886.

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**Have Questions? Need more information?** Call the Finance Department at (310) 544.5304 or email finance@rpvca.gov.

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COUNT ME IN

The great American 2020 census is underway and RPV is doing great. The current return rate is 74.3%, which is just below PVE and ahead of LA and Orange Hills. For comparison’s sake, the overall U.S. response rate is 60.5%. The goal is 100% compliance so it’s up to everyone to do their part.

The census, which occurs every ten years as mandated by the U.S. Constitution, provides the basis for apportioning congressional seats, redistricting, and distributing more than $675 billion annually in federal funds. This is crucial as it is estimated that California and local communities could lose $1,950 per year for ten years for each person not counted in the decennial census.

Please be sure to respond online, by phone, or via mail to be counted and please note that the Census Bureau will never ask for your Social Security number, bank or credit card account numbers, money or donations, or anything on behalf of a political party.

For more information, please visit the official 2020 Census website at http://2020census.gov.

TRANG NGUYEN

Tell us about your past work and educational experiences and how they prepared you for your current position as RPV’s Finance Director.

I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and a Master’s Degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Leadership and Managing Change. I have been in the public service sector for over 18 years. I have done everything from grant writing and processing timesheets for substitute teachers to managing a $365 million modernization project and developing a budget of over $150 million.

Many of our readers may have heard of a Finance Director at a City Council meeting, or know they help create and manage the City budget, but there may not know all that a Finance Director does. Can you elaborate on your responsibilities as Finance Director?

I like to think of the Finance Department as the bookkeeper for the City’s assets. Besides developing the City’s annual budget, I monitor the City’s internal controls to prevent misuse of funds and fraud. I oversee the day-to-day operations and participate in labor negotiations. I collaborate with other Directors and the City Manager to carry out City Council goals. I continuously monitor the business process and find ways to be more efficient and effective. I’m also the City’s Treasurer, so I’m responsible for monitoring the City’s cash flow and investment portfolio.

What qualities should an effective Finance Director possess?

An effective director needs to be an effective leader. Obviously, it is important for a director to have technical expertise but I think an effective Finance Director needs to have a vision, be an agent for change, and be able to build effective relationships. You started as a Finance Director in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. What was it like taking on a new and challenging position in the midst of the worldwide financial crisis? Any advice for our residents during this difficult time?

Taking on a new position at any time would be a challenge in itself, but taking on a director position during a pandemic, in the middle of a budget season, was beyond challenging. I am fortunate to be in a position where I am surrounded by a group of hard-working, dedicated professional staff who had not asked for a better outcome. And as my mom has always reminded me, with every challenge there is an opportunity. The best advice I can offer during the difficult time would be to be patient, respectful, and kind to one another.

How would you describe the current rate of RPV’s finances? The current state of RPV’s finance is stable because of the long tradition of being fiscally responsible. The leadership of the prior and current management and City Council has been responsible in keeping the fiscal impact of COVID-19. We were able to absorb a projected $6 million loss by utilizing our reserves and minimal impact to services and our employees. We also were able to provide guidance for a Preliminary Budget and not very many cities can say that today.

Would you like to tell the residents of RPV to know about you?

Well, first and foremost I just want to say that I am grateful for the opportunity to serve this beautiful community as the new Director of Finance. I am grateful to the City Manager, Ara Mihriyan, for believing in me and my vision. I’m excited for this new chapter in my career. This is not an opportunity that I take lightly. So I just want the residents of RPV, the City Council, and the City staff to know that I am here to serve. If there is anything I can do for you, please do not hesitate to reach out.

How do you enjoy spending time away from work?

Outside of work, I am very family oriented and enjoy spending time with my son and daughter. Also, I have nieces and a nephew. My month-old nephew. They are my babies, my world. Seeing their smiles and being goofy with them brings me so much joy. I also like to travel to quiet and peaceful places where I can be away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

What activity have you missed the most during COVID-19?

What I miss most during this lockdown is my playtime with my nieces and nephew. As I mentioned earlier, I am not working, I am hanging out with my little ones. I miss having them running toward me and calling me “Bac Hai,” which means “auntie” in Vietnamese. I love sharing my kids’ adventures, experiences, and the hustle of everyday life.

What activity have you missed the most during COVID-19?

I think my all-time favorite book would have to be Motherless Daugheter by Hope Edelman. My favorite movie... this is a hard one because I have so many, but the one that I can watch over and over again without getting bored is the 1970 classic Love Story. My favorite sport to watch is basketball because that’s the sport that I can make sense of when watching. My favorite music right now is K-Pop, because I can get lost to listen to when I am with my daughter.