

Shayna Sharke

From: Nicole Pete <nicolempete@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 17, 2026 10:47 PM
To: Economic Development; Comment
Subject: Thank You and Feedback Regarding the Dana Point Nature Interpretive Center Mural

You don't often get email from nicolempete@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City of Dana Point Team,

I want to thank everyone involved with the Dana Point Nature Interpretive Center mural project. I am truly grateful to have been selected as one of the six finalists and appreciate the time and consideration given to my work.

Following today's City Hall meeting, I wanted to respectfully share a few concerns regarding the selection process.

The Call for Artists stated that "Submissions should be created by the artist and not generated by Artificial Intelligence." I understood this to mean that AI could not be used at any point in creating the submission, including generating reference imagery. Because of that interpretation, I did not use AI in developing my concept. If the City's intention was to prohibit AI-generated artwork but allow AI-generated references, I believe that distinction should have been stated more clearly so all finalists could work under the same expectations.

I also followed the direction to use muted, natural tones and organic forms that blend with the coastal sage scrub environment, even though my usual artwork incorporates brighter, more vibrant colors. Because the submission was described as a "preliminary concept drawing," I was under the impression that the six finalists would have additional opportunities for review, refinement, and presentation before the final mural was selected, particularly since the listed contract award date was September 15, 2026.

I have invested significant time researching the Acjachemen people, the Dana Point Headlands, native plants and wildlife, and the cultural history of the area. As a Native American artist, I understand the importance of approaching another Tribal community's culture with respect and humility, and I would have welcomed the opportunity to continue developing the work alongside Acjachemen community members.

Thank you again for the opportunity and for including me among the six finalists. I sincerely appreciate everyone's time and effort, and I look forward to seeing the resolution of the selection process.

In addition, if given the opportunity for all artists to submit a closer final rendering, I would absolutely love to submit something closer to my vision with color changes and moving my water scene over as that part of the wall on the left does not seem to be part of the mural.

Respectfully,

Shayna Sharke

From: MARKUS LENDER <markuslenger@mac.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2026 10:27 AM
To: Katrina.Foley@ocgov.com; Fourth.District@ocgov.com; Janet.Nguyen@ocgov.com; Vicente.Sarmiento@ocgov.com; Donald.Wagner@ocgov.com; Comment
Cc: Comment
Subject: Follow-Up: Fair, Market-Based Slip Rate Guidelines Needed - Dana Point Harbor Leases (August 25 Agenda)

You don't often get email from markuslenger@mac.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing again regarding the Dana Point Harbor Master Leases, now continued to your August 25, 2026 meeting. Thank you to Supervisors Wagner and Sarmiento for slowing this process down to make sure the new leases actually fix the problems in the current ones.

I want to renew my request that the Board require fair, market-based slip fee guidelines in the new leases, with real boater parity built in. This is the piece that still seems to be missing from the current draft, and it's the piece that matters most to the boaters who will be living with these leases for the next 66-plus years.

Dana Point Harbor exists under a Tidelands Grant for the development of a harbor for public use, not as a vehicle for open-ended private slip fee increases. Over the last eight years, slip prices have more than doubled in most cases, with no clear guidelines in the current lease on how those increases are set. A 66-year lease term is long enough that a boater priced out today has no realistic path back in. Locking in fair, transparent, and enforceable rate-setting guidelines now is the only way to make sure this asset still serves the public, and the boating community, for the life of these leases.

I ask that the Board require this before final approval on August 25.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Markus Lenger
Dana Point resident and boater

Markus J Lenger
34605 Via Catalina
Capistrano Beach, CA 92624

Mobile (949) 412-2600

KE6GEZ GMT-9

Shayna Sharke

From: Gina Lenger <ginalenger@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 20, 2026 9:47 AM
To: Katrina.Foley@ocgov.com; Fourth.District@ocgov.com; Janet.Nguyen@ocgov.com; Vicente.Sarmiento@ocgov.com; Donald.Wagner@ocgov.com
Cc: Comment
Subject: Follow-Up: Fair, Market-Based Slip Rate Guidelines Needed - Dana Point Harbor Leases (August 25 Agenda)

You don't often get email from ginalenger@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Supervisors,

I am writing again regarding the Dana Point Harbor Master Leases, now continued to your August 25, 2026 meeting. Thank you to Supervisors Wagner and Sarmiento for slowing this process down to make sure the new leases actually fix the problems in the current ones.

I want to renew my request that the Board require fair, market-based slip fee guidelines in the new leases, with real boater parity built in. This is the piece that still seems to be missing from the current draft, and it's the piece that matters most to the boaters who will be living with these leases for the next 66-plus years.

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I ask that the Board require this before final approval on August 25.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Gina Lenger
Dana Point resident and boater

Gina Lenger
(949) 212-2862

Shayna Sharke

From: Alex Brown <Alex9355b@outlook.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2026 4:56 PM
To: Comment
Subject: Public comment for the city council meeting

You don't often get email from alex9355b@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I pray and hope that this city will never fall into **the pit of mismanagement** that is OC Animal Care.

Any animal sheltering option is better than that.

Look at a just-published column by Ed Boks, the former Executive Director of the New York City, Los Angeles, and Maricopa County Animal Care & Control Departments, whose work has been published in the LA Times, New York Times, and Newsweek.

Orange County Animal Care: A Case Study in California's Oversight Vacuum

<https://animalpolitics.substack.com/p/why-californias-shelter-oversight>

And look at what Voice of OC revealed:

Does Orange County's Animal Care Director Live in California?

<https://voiceofoc.org/2026/07/does-orange-countys-animal-care-director-live-in-california/>

The head of Orange County's embattled animal shelter is facing questions over remote work, with questions about how much time she spends between Texas and California.

- [OCShelter.com](#) has a collection of recent articles — and a complete list you can download. Below is just a sample. **Advocates have caught the shelter director in flagrant lies** many times before. There's a pattern here.

OC Register, September 25, 2024

County managers failed our animal shelter

<https://www.ocregister.com/2024/09/24/county-managers-failed-our-animal-shelter/>

[Note: *There's a problem in the OC Register app.* If that app is on your device, press and hold the link, copy it, and then paste it into your web browser.]

If you're having trouble with the above link, try this [Shareable Link](#).

<https://www.ocregister.com/2024/09/24/county-managers-failed-our-animal-shelter/?share=2opwholwe04gnaisaeiw>

Voice of OC, September 5, 2024

The OC Animal Shelter Director is All Image and No Substance

<https://voiceofoc.org/2024/09/mavrovouniotis-the-oc-animal-shelter-director-is-all-image-and-no-substance/>

The county bureaucracy prefers political spinning over operational knowledge and experience. That's why they chose Monica Schmidt for OC Animal Care Director. She overstated her animal sheltering qualifications to get the job, and she habitually misleads the community and elected officials.

Voice of OC, November 22, 2023

The OC Animal Shelter Lied About Its Safety Record. It Needed an Excuse to Keep the Kennels Off-Limits and Ditch Its Strategic Plan.

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/11/mavrovouniotis-the-oc-animal-shelter-lied-about-its-safety-record-it-needed-an-excuse-to-keep-the-kennels-off-limits-and-ditch-its-strategic-plan/>

The county misinformed the public and the Grand Jury. It understated the number of bites that occurred at the animal shelter in 2021-2022. In reality, shelter policies resulted in no safety improvements. False statistics served as a smokescreen for disregarding the Strategic Plan, blocking public access, and lowering animal care standards.

Voice of OC, November 14, 2023

Yamashiro: OC Animal Care Gave Hundreds of Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, and Birds to a Reptile Group. What Happened to Them?

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/11/yamashiro-oc-animal-care-gave-hundreds-of-rabbits-guinea-pigs-and-birds-to-a-reptile-group-what-happened-to-them/>

Voice of OC, August 7, 2023

Lawther: OC Animal Care is Unable to Keep Track of its Animals

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/08/lawther-oc-animal-care-is-unable-to-keep-track-of-its-animals/>

OCAC appears to have fabricated the only 2023 animal statistics it has published so far. We effectively know nothing about current animal intakes, outcomes, or kill rates. What we do know is that their data can't be trusted. It's time for the Board of Supervisor to act.

OC Register, May 6, 2026

OC pays \$450,000 to shelter volunteer who was mauled by a dog

<https://www.ocregister.com/2026/05/06/oc-pays-450000-to-shelter-volunteer-who-was-mauled-by-a-dog/>

'The events of that day left me scarred both physically and mentally and continue to haunt me to this day,' says the 46-year-old victim

Voice of OC, March 17, 2026

The County Animal Shelter has a Data Integrity Problem

<https://voiceofoc.org/2026/03/mavrovouniotis-the-county-animal-shelter-has-a-data-integrity-problem/>

Numbers don't add up at OC Animal Care, and it's not the first time. In shelter statistics, animals inexplicably vanish between reports. The billing calculations are based on faulty data as well. Why do the county and OC cities allow this?

Fullerton Observer, March 5, 2026

Companion Animal Protection Society Releases Short Documentary Entitled A CAPS Investigation of OC Animal Care

<https://fullertonobserver.com/2026/03/05/companion-animal-protection-society-releases-short-documentary-entitled-a-caps-investigation-of-oc-animal-care/>

Shelter mismanagement and failure by the county to conform to a strategic plan and audits have resulted in animal suffering.

You can view the 15-minute video here: [A CAPS Investigation of OC Animal Care](#)

Voice of OC, February 2, 2026

Lamirande: How Negligent are OC Cities in Their Contract with the County Animal Shelter?

<https://voiceofoc.org/2026/02/lamirande-how-negligent-are-oc-cities-in-their-contract-with-the-county-animal-shelter/>

Dear city officials, if you hire people with a track record of dishonesty and incompetence, you're responsible for the consequences. If you are in favor of good governance and a good shelter you must make two demands: First, get rid of toxic managers. Second, transparently implement the Strategic Plan.

OC Register, August 17, 2025

Owner of Woofy Acres dog rescue charged with 16 counts of animal cruelty

<https://www.ocregister.com/2025/08/15/owner-of-woofy-acres-dog-rescue-charged-with-multiple-counts-of-animal-cruelty/>

Excerpts:

The owner of a Southern California dog rescue has been charged with 37 criminal counts of mistreating the animals, nearly 100 of which were in such bad condition they had to be euthanized.

Woofy Acres first made headlines in early 2024 after Bedford was accused of abandoning 32 dogs — many from Orange County — at a Rowland Heights kennel in Los Angeles County.

Woofy Acres was heavily used by Orange County Animal Care.

Orange County Animal Care has released a total of 149 dogs to Woofy Acres, with the last placement in January 2024. It is unclear whether any dogs from Orange County were among the dogs seized by authorities.

Voice of OC, August 7, 2025

Two Dogs Dead in Transport from OC Animal Care to Idaho

<https://voiceofoc.org/2025/08/two-dogs-dead-in-transport-from-oc-animal-care-to-idaho/>

Excerpt:

"U.S. Department of Transportation statistics show shortnosed breeds of dogs are more likely to die during air transport than dogs with normal-length muzzles, and similar risks are likely during road transportation," reads a best practices resource document from the AVMA for relocating pets in non-emergency situations.

"This is thought to be related to respiratory problems that are exacerbated by stress and difficulty with thermoregulation, so caution should be exercised when transporting these animals during warm weather," it continues.

When transporting animals on the road, the American Veterinary Medical Association recommends keeping the trips as short as possible.

Voice of OC, February 18, 2025

OC Cities are Badly Served by the County Animal Shelter. Is Reform Possible?

<https://voiceofoc.org/2025/02/lamirande-oc-cities-are-badly-served-by-the-county-animal-shelter-is-reform-possible/>

Residents paid OC Animal Care \$5.8 million in license fees. On top of that, OC cities paid \$15.7 million out of their budgets. The county bureaucracy collected \$8.4 million in admin costs. Supervisors Nguyen and Sarmiento, representing high-paying cities, are pushing for a better shelter. Supervisor Foley is protecting the mismanagement.

Animal Politics with Ed Boks, Substack, January 24, 2025

Vanished Without a Trace: The Mystery of the Disappearing Animals at Orange County Animal Care

<https://animalpolitics.substack.com/p/vanished-without-a-trace-the-mystery>

(The author, Ed Boks, is a former Executive Director of the New York City, Los Angeles, and Maricopa County Animal Care & Control Departments. His work has been published in the LA Times, New York Times, Newsweek, Real Clear Policy, Sentient Media, and now on Animal Politics with Ed Boks)

Voice of OC, November 22, 2024

Boyer: County Managers Responsible for the Animal Shelter's Decline are Turning Their Back on the Community

<https://voiceofoc.org/2024/11/boyer-county-managers-responsible-for-the-animal-shelters-decline-are-turning-their-back-on-the-community/>

County managers and the animal shelter director are stalling and delaying. They're not applying the shelter's Strategic Plan. They want to throw it away and waste taxpayer money on a "new" plan, to cover up their own failure. They are turning their back on community standards.

Foothills Sentry, October 30, 2024

Failing Furry Friends

<https://foothillssentry.com/letters/f/letters-to-the-editor-failing-furry-friends>

Excerpts:

Dedicated OC animal shelter volunteers are sounding the alarm.

A 2023 report by the OC Grand Jury documented the understaffing in animal care attendants (ACAs), the conscientious frontline staff responsible for the day-to-day care of "hundreds of dogs, cats, kittens, and other animals." Instead of addressing the problem, [shelter director] Schmidt has resorted to false statements to cover it up.

The volunteers offer a stark breakdown of the staffing numbers. At the time of the Grand Jury report, there were only 21 ACA positions. The county's own consultants recommended having 52 (two weekly shifts of 26 each). Can 21 staff members do the work of 52?

"You've been lied to," warn the volunteers. Schmidt "has done what she does best and told you a story about staffing that simply isn't true."

Schmidt has a "penchant for making up numbers." The letter urges the Board of Supervisors to investigate further and to "send a clear message to Monica Schmidt that lies will not be tolerated." Her failure to address these critical staffing issues directly impacts the care of the animals.

New revelations surfaced after the volunteers' letter: It appears that Schmidt grossly inflated her qualifications in her job application. This certainly explains the combination of ignorance and disinformation that are the hallmarks of her management style.

Voice of OC, May 16, 2024

Yamashiro: OC Animal Care – Mismanagement and Public Deception Regarding Small Pets

<https://voiceofoc.org/2024/05/yamashiro-oc-animal-care-mismanagement-and-public-deception-regarding-small-pets/>

OC Animal Care has been involved in transferring small pets to a reptile organization, which subsequently transported them to Arizona. In a related situation, it was reported that small pets from San Diego Humane Society were likely sold in Arizona as snake food. OCAC has not provided clear explanations regarding the fate of these animals, and support from County Supervisors Wagner and Foley has been lacking.

Fullerton Observer, March 12, 2024

More Bad News About Orange County Animal Care

<https://fullertonobserver.com/2024/03/12/more-bad-news-about-orange-county-animal-care/>

Excerpts:

On September 10 last year, the OC animal shelter handed over rescue dogs Baron, Kate, Enzo, and Nevin to the group Woofy Acres. OC staff were concerned. Jaime Link, OCAC Operations Manager, wrote:

"We recently had a rescue pick-up with the listed representative, Diane (see PID screenshot), and the shelter team reported that her vehicle emitted an odor of animal waste and grime reminiscent of most hoarding houses. She was also behaving erratically and yelling at staff in the lobby. The rescuer has recently been pulling a lot of aggressive dogs (5 today), and I am concerned they may be going into less-than-ideal conditions."

In the nine prior weeks (from July 5 to September 8 last year), the OC animal shelter had already given 21 dogs to Woofy Acres. The shelter gave a total of 128 dogs to Woofy Acres in 2020-2023.

In February, the OC Register reported that Woofy Acres abandoned 32 dogs at a dog boarding facility last year. Some were in the facility for two years. Woofy Acres is delinquent on its bills and state-mandated paperwork. Almost half of the abandoned dogs were given to Woofy Acres by OC Animal Care in 2021. The OC shelter gave many more dogs to Woofy Acres in 2022 and 2023; what happened to them is unknown.

Spokesperson Alexa Pratt told the Register that *"the agency was unaware of any problems with Woofy Acres when it released dogs to the rescue, the last ones going in early January."*

But Jaime Link's September 10, 2023 email tells a different story. OC was very aware of problems through the first-hand observations of conscientious staff.

It is unknown what research the shelter did, but it seems it didn't even try to verify Woofy Acres's charity status with the state.

Michael Mavrovouniotis, an animal welfare advocate, said, *"Mid-level and frontline OCAC staff love the animals and are doing their best to get good outcomes for them. I applaud Jaime Link and the animal care staff, who spoke up. They did the right thing. They showed a better shelter is possible. However, the top managers at the shelter and OC Community Resources don't show the same concern for the welfare of the animals in their care. They falsely claim that they didn't know there were any problems."*

The shelter just kept handing animals over to Woofy Acres. In the last five months of 2023, the shelter gave 48 dogs to Woofy Acres after Woofy Acres had already abandoned dogs. Of those, 23 dogs were handed over after Jaime Link's red-flag email describing erratic behavior and signs of hoarding.

Unaccounted animals include Tate, Bonnie, and Gadget, who came from Fullerton. None of these dogs are in the boarding facility. The shelter booked them as successes in its statistics, but the actual fate of the animals is unknown. OC residents concerned about what happened to these dogs

can [http://The%20OCAC%20has%20been%20criticized%20for%20not%20tracking%20animals%20in%20its%20statistics,%20giving%20pet%20bunnies,%20hamsters,%20and%20guinea%20pigs%20to%20a%20group%20specializing%20in%20snakes,%20and%20maintaining%20pandemic-

era%20policies.%20On%20September%2010%20last%20year,%20the%20OC%20animal%20shelter%20handed%20over%20rescue%20dogs%20Baron,%20Kate,%20Enzo,%20and%20Nevin%20to%20the%20group%20Woofy%20Acres.%20OC%20staff%20were%20concerned.%20Jaime%20Link,%20OCAC%20Operations%20Manager,%20wrote]contact the Board of Supervisors and their local elected officials to ask for a full accounting.

OC Register, March 5, 2024

Animal rescue abandons dozens of dogs at Rowland Heights kennel

Dogs from OC agency among 32 abandoned by group

<https://www.ocregister.com/2024/03/04/animal-rescue-abandons-dozens-of-dogs-at-rowland-heights-shelter/>

Excerpts:

Especially troubling to animal activists is that Orange County Animal Care has released 128 dogs to Woofy Acres since 2019, according to county records compiled by activist Michael Mavrovouniotis.

"The Orange County shelter just takes the view that we don't care who takes the animals as long as we get them off our books,"

He believes Orange County Animal Care should do a better job of screening animal rescues and following up on placements.

"It's part of (Orange County's) reliance on rescues," Mavrovouniotis said. "The shelter is not doing enough to make adoptions easier and their safety valve is to push as many animals as possible ... to rescues."

OC Register, February 11, 2024

Fewer dogs, more death, at OC Animal Care

<https://www.ocregister.com/2024/02/11/fewer-dogs-more-death-at-oc-animal-care/>

Column: Comparison of pre- and post-pandemic years show failure of shelter policies, critics charge. But things are changing, shelter asks for support

Excerpts:

The "kill rate" for dogs at Orange County's main animal shelter shot up markedly under its appointment-centric visitation system, where folks couldn't browse the full furry inventory at their leisure, data suggests.

Rather than throwing the doors all the way open, Orange County stuck largely to pandemic protocol last year, preferring that people peruse pooch photos online, then make appointments to meet those animals in person. [...] "Concierge service," they called it.

Critics countered that the system benefitted shelter managers, not animals or the adopting public. It's easier to not have all those pesky outside eyeballs on your operations, they charged.

Three hours every day is better, critics said, but all the kennels with adoptable animals should welcome the public every hour they're open.

Nationally, the number of dogs who were euthanized or who died in care rose as well. But while that jumped 12% nationwide, it rose 54% in Orange County. That, Mavrovouniotis maintains, shows O.C. is doing something wrong. "By any metric I looked at, national trends don't explain OCAC's decline," he said.

Yes, folks, please, absolutely. Foster! Volunteer! Help our unwanted animals be wanted and loved again! Let them sleep on the bed!

We may be a bit naïve, but it seems that supporting the shelter, and opening it wider as activists demand, are not necessarily mutually exclusive things.

"It's quite simple, really," said Boyer. "They need to open up the shelter all the way, all the buildings, so people can walk through and look at all the available dogs. It was working fine before COVID. Why don't you back to doing what you did?"

The numbers, Boyers maintains, understate the full magnitude of the problem. "Because of slow adoptions, the shelter got severely overcrowded in the fall. A lot of dogs weren't going to make it out alive, but the hangar fire brought in the ASPCA that saved 100+ dogs.

"Under the partial re-opening, the public can view only about 65 to 70 dogs. But the shelter has about 100 dogs available for adoption. Visitors should be able to see all of them in their kennels. The shelter shouldn't be hiding 30 to 35 dogs out of sight."

Fullerton Observer, January 2, 2024

Animal Advocates Call for Independent Investigation of OC Animal Care

<https://fullertonobserver.com/2024/01/02/animal-advocates-call-for-independent-investigation-of-oc-animal-care/>

Excerpts with added web links to supporting documents:

In just 20 months, OC Animal Care (OCAC) gave 273 rodents, 200 rabbits, and other small pets to a reptile group.

On a recent similar case involving animals from San Diego, the [Sacramento Bee reports](#) that: "Information clearly indicates (the reptile breeder's) intention to use these animals as feed instead of finding them adoptive homes."

Snapshots of email correspondence obtained via Public Record requests show that the OC shelter typically offered many small pets at once. The reptile group then took rodents and rabbits in bulk without asking for precise numbers and types of animals. That's highly unusual.

OC Animal Care made this reptile group its primary destination for small pets.

In the past, [the reptile group] has advertised the availability of "feeder" rodents, including live ones. An independent outside investigator must be appointed directly by the Board of Supervisors to get a verifiable paper trail for every animal the OC shelter handed over to the reptile group.

OC Register, December 21, 2023

Orange County supervisors shrug at shelter's animal cruelty

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/12/19/orange-county-supervisors-shrug-at-shelters-animal-cruelty>

Excerpts:

The problems focus on poor management that leads to the unnecessary euthanizing of adoptable pets. The issue cries out for attention from the Board of Supervisors.

One issue, detailed in news reports and columns, is easy to fix. Animal Care continues with COVID-era limitations on public access to kennels and has cut back programs to proactively find homes for homeless pets. That's unconscionable this long after the lifting of pandemic restrictions.

The Register's Teri Sforza found such policies have contributed to maddening statistics: a kill rate for adult dogs that "has nearly doubled since 2018, and the amount of time they spend behind bars has jumped 60%." Local activists have been providing alarming data and anecdotal stories.

OC Register, December 2, 2023

OC Animal Care sought to avoid optics of sending bunnies to local reptile rescue group

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/12/01/oc-animal-care-sought-to-avoid-optics-of-sending-bunnies-to-local-reptile-rescue-group/>

Foothills Sentry, December 1, 2023

OC Animal Care doesn't

<https://foothillssentry.com/letters/f/letters-to-the-editor-oc-animal-care-doesnt>

If you want to see the printed layout:

<https://fbs.advantageinc.com/foothillssentry/122023/4/>

Voice of OC, October 25, 2023

Lawther: Animal Shelter Deteriorates as County Bureaucracy Keeps Supervisors in the Dark

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/10/lawther-animal-shelter-deteriorates-as-county-bureaucracy-keeps-supervisors-in-the-dark/>

OC Community Resources covered up the deterioration of the animal shelter. It put together a false narrative for internal use, but kept it from the public. Meanwhile, the shelter's kill rate is rising, dogs get very little socialization, and data collection is dismal. Why is the shelter flouting its own Strategic Plan?

OC Register, October 14, 2023

Advocates horrified over mysterious fate of small animals

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/10/13/advocates-horrified-over-mysterious-fate-of-small-animals/?share=saaetyscecmamsawlie>

or

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/10/13/advocates-horrified-over-mysterious-fate-of-small-animals/>

Voice of OC, October 4, 2023

Lamirande: Volunteer Mauled by Dog at Orange County Animal Care, While Mismanagement Worsens

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/10/lamirande-volunteer-mauled-by-dog-at-orange-county-animal-care-while-mismanagement-worsens/>

Voice of OC, August 24, 2023

Barba: OC Animal Care Needs to Get Its Facts Straight

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/08/barba-oc-animal-care-needs-to-get-its-facts-straight/>

OCAC is making false claims to cover up its poor performance. It can't even count its animals correctly. Although fewer animals are coming in than pre-pandemic, the shelter has higher kill rates and longer stays. More adopted animals end up returned. OCAC has been failing its Strategic Plan – and hiding it.

Fullerton Observer, August 16, 2023 (This is a multi-section article. Make sure you scroll down!)

OC residents raise concerns over OC Animal Care shelter

Orange County Tax Payers and Homeless Animals Deserve Better

OC Animal Care is continuing to mislead the public

<https://fullertonobserver.com/2023/08/16/oc-residents-raise-concerns-over-oc-animal-care-shelter/>

Voice of OC, August 10, 2023

OC Officials Dispute Scathing Grand Jury Report on Increased Kill Rates at Animal Shelter

<https://voiceofoc.org/2023/08/oc-officials-dispute-scathing-grand-jury-report-on-increased-kill-rates-at-animal-shelter/>

OC Register, May 11, 2023

OC's animal shelter still a killing zone

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/05/11/ocs-animal-shelter-still-a-killing-zone/>

OC Register, May 10, 2023

Revamp Orange County Animal Care shelter policies, critics tell OC supervisors

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/05/10/revamp-orange-county-animal-care-shelter-policies-critics-tell-oc-supervisors/>

OC Register, May 7, 2023

More adult dogs dying at OC Animal Care, kennels largely off-limits

<https://www.ocregister.com/2023/05/07/more-adult-dogs-dying-at-oc-animal-care-kennels-largely-off-limits/?share=tocecdmereiywdporla0>

From: [Gary Macrides](#)
To: [John Gabbard](#); [Matthew Pagano](#); [Jamey Federico](#); [Mike Frost](#); [Michael Villar](#); [Shayna Sharke](#); [Holly Martino](#)
Cc: [Shayna Sharke](#)
Subject: Mission Hospital Laguna Beach Should Remain a Full-Service Emergency Department
Date: Tuesday, September 1, 2026 4:19:26 PM
Attachments: [Mission Laguna Closure .pdf](#)

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Dear Honorable Mayor Gabbard and City Council,

I am writing to respectfully urge the City of Dana Point to take a stand with and to send a letter of support to Laguna Beach urging them to take every possible action to preserve Mission Hospital Laguna Beach as a full-service acute care hospital with a 24-hour Emergency Department. And also, perhaps add as an agenda item on the City Council Agenda for discussion.

The loss of our community hospital would have far-reaching consequences—not only for Laguna Beach, but also for Dana Point and indeed Laguna Niguel, Aliso Viejo, Monarch Beach, South Laguna, and the millions of residents and area visitors who rely on this facility every year.

For coastal communities, emergency care is measured in minutes. During peak tourist seasons, Pacific Coast Highway congestion, wildfires, landslides, or other emergencies, transporting patients to Mission Viejo or Newport Beach can add precious minutes when treating heart attacks, strokes, traumatic injuries, drowning victims, and other life-threatening medical emergencies. The loss of local emergency services would also place additional strain on neighboring hospitals and emergency medical systems throughout South Orange County.

Our community deserves a transparent discussion about every available option before such an essential public safety resource is lost.

I have attached a fact sheet outlining the history of service reductions, recent investments elsewhere within the Providence system, and the potential impact that the loss of emergency services would have on South Orange County for your reference.

The Laguna Beach hospital has faithfully served our community since 1959. It was built by the community seeing a need for local care after a Laguna Beach officer was shot and died after not being able to receive immediate care — it is a cornerstone of public safety and an essential part of our emergency preparedness infrastructure. I have respectfully asked the Laguna Beach City Council to use every resource available to protect this institution and to ensure that no option is left unexplored before emergency and acute care services are lost. The residents of Dana Point would appreciate your participation at any level.

Thank you for your continued leadership and your commitment to protecting the health and safety of our community.

Respectfully,

Gary Macrides

Realtor, Green, SRES, SFR
Your OC Coastal Home Connection
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Why Mission Hospital Laguna Beach Should Remain an Acute Care Hospital with a Full-Service Emergency Department

In January 2026 Providence Mission Hospital CEO Seth Teigen stood before the Laguna Beach City Council stating that the local hospital's emergency room and acute care services were "not part of the long-term plan"

1. Providence Has Chosen to Invest Elsewhere While Reducing Laguna Beach Services

Providence has publicly committed to a major \$712 million expansion of its Mission Viejo campus, including:

- A new patient tower with nearly 100 private rooms
- New operating suites
- Additional cardiac catheterization labs
- Expanded neuroscience, cardiovascular, and maternity programs
- New health centers in Rancho Mission Viejo and San Clemente

These projects represent a substantial investment in South Orange County healthcare infrastructure. Providence announced this multi-stage expansion beginning in 2022 while simultaneously evaluating significant reductions at Laguna Beach.

For every dollar Providence spent maintaining Laguna Beach, they poured fifty-seven into Mission Viejo. When a health system invests three-quarters of a billion dollars in one site while pleading poverty regarding a satellite campus eight miles away, the message is unambiguous: the "financial constraint" is a myth. Neglect was a choice.

A fair question for the community is:

If Providence has the financial capacity to build new facilities and expand Mission Viejo, why is preserving emergency and inpatient services in Laguna Beach not receiving the same commitment?

2. The Laguna Beach Campus Has Already Been Gradually Reduced

Residents have witnessed a steady migration of higher-acuity services away from Laguna Beach and toward Mission Viejo over many years.

The community perception—and one supported by the operational changes over time—is that Laguna Beach has been systematically gutted, by design, and transformed from a full-service community hospital into a limited-care campus.

Many residents argue the current situation is not the result of lack of demand, but rather years of strategic consolidation.

This creates a troubling cycle as services were removed Like:

- April 2023, Providence relocated its outpatient physical therapy clinic from Laguna Beach to the Mission Viejo campus.
- May 2023, Providence relocated both inpatient and outpatient Gastroenterology (GI) services from Laguna Beach to Mission Viejo. The organization stated the purpose was to centralize specialists and technology at a single location.
- May 2023, Outpatient Laboratory Services, Discontinued at Laguna Beach

While Providence described these moves as operational efficiencies, many residents viewed them as part of a gradual consolidation of services away from the Laguna Beach campus.

The concern is straightforward: When specialized services leave a hospital, patient volumes naturally decline. Lower utilization can then be cited as, as is currently, justification for additional reductions, creating a cycle that ultimately threatens the hospital's long-term viability. Some have called this a Strategic Abandonment and an Engineered Collapse of Laguna Beach's Hospital & Emergency Room.

3. Providence Previously Invested in Expanding the Laguna Beach Emergency Department

In 2019, Mission Hospital completed a major expansion of the Laguna Beach Emergency Department.

The project increased ED capacity by approximately 30%, adding new exam rooms, observation chairs, triage space, and increasing total bed capacity to 20. The stated goal was to improve patient flow and reduce waiting times.

This raises an important question:

Why invest in expanding and modernizing the Emergency Department only a few years ago if the long-term plan was to eliminate emergency services?

The community helped support and fund those improvements with the expectation that emergency care would remain available.

Also, local philanthropists Sue and Bill Gross donated \$10 million to Mission Hospital Laguna Beach. In recognition of this generous gift, Mission Hospital renamed the Laguna Beach Emergency Department - The Sue and Bill Gross Emergency Department at Mission Hospital Laguna Beach. According to a report at the time by prnewswire, "Sue and Bill Gross' Spirit of Giving will allow Mission Hospital Laguna Beach to implement a comprehensive plan that includes new imaging technologies, expanded and enhanced facilities, and the *provision of emergency support services to ensure sustainability for generations to come.*"

4. Closing the ER Would Affect Far More Than Laguna Beach

Providence itself has acknowledged that the Laguna Beach campus serves a regional population.

The potential closure would directly affect residents of:

- Laguna Beach
- Dana Point
- Laguna Niguel
- Aliso Viejo
- South Laguna
- Emerald Bay
- Monarch Beach
- Coastal visitors and tourists

The issue is not simply a “Laguna Beach problem.” Multiple reports specifically identify Dana Point and Laguna Niguel residents among those who rely on this facility.

5. Emergency Room Closures Have Measurable Health Consequences

National research from the NIH found that when emergency departments close:

- Travel times increase.
- Remaining hospitals become more crowded.
- Quality of care can decline.
- Mortality rates increase at already crowded receiving hospitals.

One NIH-supported study found that when ER closures significantly increased travel times, one-year mortality for heart attack patients at crowded hospitals increased by 8%.

The principle is simple:

In emergency medicine, minutes matter.

- Heart attacks
- Strokes
- Drowning incidents
- Traffic collisions
- Severe allergic reactions
- Cardiac arrests

Additional transport time can be the difference between life and death.

One concern raised by Laguna Beach residents and city officials is that if the Providence Mission Hospital Laguna Beach Emergency Department were to close, many of those patients would instead be transported to Mission Viejo. Critics argue this could increase patient volume, ambulance traffic, and wait times at an already busy regional trauma center. Providence has not published projections quantifying what effect a Laguna Beach ER closure would have on Mission Viejo's emergency department volumes or wait times.

Mission Viejo's Wait times According to Hospitalcaredata;

ER Wait Time: 42 minutes before being seen by a doctor.

Time Before Admission: 5 hours 14 minutes before being admitted to hospital.

Shutting the Laguna Beach ED will only exacerbate the wait and risk.

6. Coastal Geography Makes Laguna Different

Unlike inland communities, Laguna Beach has limited access routes.

Key concerns include:

- Pacific Coast Highway congestion
- Summer tourism traffic
- Wildfire evacuations
- Landslides
- Coastal storm events
- Highway incidents

During peak summer weekends, transporting a patient from Laguna Beach to Mission Viejo can take significantly longer than theoretical drive times.

A coastal city with constrained access should arguably have more emergency capacity—not less.

7. The Community Has Already Paid for This Hospital

Mission Hospital Laguna Beach exists because generations of local residents, donors, physicians, volunteers, and taxpayers built and supported it.

The hospital is not merely a Providence asset, it is a community institution that has served South Orange County since 1959. Providence inherited a public trust along with the facility. The primary catalyst for its construction was the 1953 tragic death of Laguna Beach Police Officer Gordon French, who was shot and died while being transported to the nearest hospital. His death spurred locals into action to ensure no one else would die due to the distance to a hospital....and history may be repeating itself!

The community therefore has a legitimate expectation that Providence will explore every reasonable option before eliminating emergency services.

8. Providence's Seismic Argument Is Real—But Not the End of the Discussion

Providence estimates that seismic compliance and infrastructure upgrades could cost approximately \$350 million.

No one disputes the need for seismic safety. Providence has cited the estimated cost of seismic upgrades as a primary reason for proposing the closure of acute care services and the Emergency Department at Mission Hospital Laguna Beach

According to the [Los Angeles Times / Daily Pilot article](#), CEO Seth Teigen told the City Council:

- The Laguna Beach hospital, built in **1959**, must comply with California's **2030 seismic safety mandate**.
- Bringing the hospital into compliance would require approximately **\$300 million** in seismic retrofitting.
- An additional **\$50 million** would be needed to replace aging electrical and plumbing systems.
- Because of those costs, Providence is evaluating a future for the campus that **does not include an acute-care hospital**.

However, California's hospital seismic requirements are not a new development. Senate Bill 1953 was signed into law in 1994—more than three decades ago—and established a long-term framework requiring hospitals to evaluate, plan for, retrofit, replace, or modernize facilities to meet seismic safety standards.

Hospital operators have been aware for decades that acute care facilities would eventually be required to meet increasingly stringent seismic standards. The final compliance deadlines did not suddenly appear. They have been discussed, modified, and extended over many years, giving hospital systems significant time to plan capital expenditures and long-term facility strategies.

Providence acquired Mission Hospital in 2009 with full knowledge of California's seismic requirements and the future obligations associated with maintaining an acute care hospital in Laguna Beach.

The community therefore has every right to ask:

If seismic compliance has been known for decades, why were long-term plans not developed sooner? Why were services moved away from Laguna Beach rather than investing in a strategy to preserve emergency and inpatient care? And why is the burden now being placed on local residents, patients, and first responders who rely on this facility?

The challenge of seismic compliance may be real, but it is not unexpected. It is a known obligation that hospital operators throughout California have been preparing for over many years.

In closing, Mission Hospital Laguna Beach is not simply a hospital building. It is a critical public safety asset serving Laguna Beach, Dana Point, Laguna Niguel, Aliso Viejo, and millions of annual visitors to South Orange County's coastline.

Providence has demonstrated its ability and willingness to invest hundreds of millions of dollars into new facilities, expansions, and specialty services elsewhere in the region, almost \$2 billion dollars. \$1.2 Billion for the new tower in Seattle, but more importantly \$715 million dollars to the MV Campus. At the same time, Laguna Beach residents have watched services steadily migrate away from their local hospital.

Closing the Emergency Department would increase transport times, place additional burdens on neighboring hospitals, reduce emergency preparedness during disasters, and jeopardize access to timely lifesaving care for coastal residents and visitors.

The question before the community is not whether Mission Hospital Laguna Beach faces challenges. It does. The question is whether a nonprofit healthcare system, with Tax Advantages, should invest in preserving emergency access for an entire coastal region or allow a vital community resource to disappear.

This is and always has been a community institution that has served South Orange County since 1959. Providence inherited a public trust along with the facility. And if they no longer have the appetite to serve their mission of providing for the local community then they should Step aside and allow another health provider/system who cares about our community take over.

For public safety, emergency preparedness, equitable healthcare access, and the wellbeing of South Orange County residents, Mission Hospital Laguna Beach should remain an acute care hospital with a full-service Emergency Department...and we the citizens would greatly appreciate any assistance that you can provide.....stick and carrot would work too!

References:

<https://medium.com/laguna-unmuted/strategic-abandonment-the-engineered-collapse-of-laguna-beach-healthcare-673a916937bf>

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/mission-hospital-laguna-beach-receives-a-10-million-gift-from-laguna-beach-residents-sue-and-bill-gross-300006703.html>

https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/charities/pdf/SCMC_Health_Impact.pdf

Continue reading and sign this petition on Change.org:

<https://c.org/y8gpqGMp8H>

A Call to Our Elected Leaders

We respectfully ask our federal, state, county and local representatives to stand with the residents of South Orange County.

We urge you to:

- Support preserving Mission Hospital Laguna Beach as a full-service acute care hospital with an ER capable of accepting Ambulance traffic
- Work with Providence, state regulators and community leaders to identify viable funding and partnership solutions.
- Ensure California's seismic safety requirements are met without sacrificing emergency healthcare access for an entire coastal region.
- Advocate for transparency regarding future, projected patient impacts and regional emergency preparedness.
- Maybe request an Exemption from Current Laws

This is not simply a Laguna Beach issue.

It is a South Orange County public safety issue.

Lives will depend on the decisions made over the next several years.

We ask our elected officials to lead, to advocate, and to help preserve this essential healthcare resource for current and future generations.

Respectfully

Gary Macrides, Dana Point Resident

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