



DATE: October 14, 2014

CATEGORY: Consent

DEPT.: Community Development

TITLE: **Appointment of Volunteer Mediators**

RECOMMENDATION

Appoint 13 volunteer mediators to two-year terms ending June 2016 as shown in Attachment 1 to the Council report.

BACKGROUND

The Mountain View Mediation Program (Program) utilizes trained volunteer mediators to mediate tenant-landlord, neighborhood, consumer, workplace, and person-to-person disputes. Thirteen (13) individuals are being recommended for appointment to the Program consisting of 6 new mediators and 7 existing mediators requesting reappointment.

The recommended appointments would result in the Program having a total of 24 volunteer mediators, which is an adequate number to handle the mediation caseload. The volunteer mediators are appointed to two-year terms and a portion of the group is newly selected or reappointed each year. The staggered term appointments ensure there is always a core of experienced mediators to assist the new mediators and provide continuity to the Program from year to year.

ANALYSIS

Mediators help resolve conflicts between individuals or groups by facilitating communication between the parties. Mediators do not judge who is right or wrong or force a decision or solution on either party. The mediator's role is to help the parties involved in a dispute to communicate with each other and find a mutually acceptable resolution.

In order to be eligible to serve as a volunteer mediator, an individual must either be a resident, own property, or work in the City of Mountain View. Applicants must

complete a written application explaining their interest in the Program and their qualifications to be a mediator. Applicants are interviewed to further assess their qualifications, availability, and interest in the Program. New applicants who are selected to participate in the Program must then successfully complete a five-day training course in mediation and communication techniques at Foothill College, or other equivalent program, before being eligible for appointment to the Program by the City Council. The recommended individuals satisfy all the requirements for appointment to the Mediation Program and will provide a good balance of renters, homeowners, and business owners as well as bilingual capabilities to the Program.

The opportunity to serve as a volunteer mediator was widely advertised. Display ads were placed in the *Mountain View Voice* announcing the recruitment of volunteer mediators. In addition, flyers were distributed and posted at a variety of community facilities and information was posted on the City's and Project Sentinel's websites.

FISCAL IMPACT – None.

ALTERNATIVES

Do not renew some or all current appointments or appoint some or all of the new members.

PUBLIC NOTICING – Agenda posting.

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893-10-14-14CR-E

Attachment: 1. List of Recommended Mediator Appointments