



CITY OF COSTA MESA

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FROM THE OFFICE OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

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City of Costa Mesa hires labor negotiator

COSTA MESA, CALIF.—The City of Costa Mesa has hired a negotiator to lead labor talks with its employee associations, City Chief Executive Office Tom Hatch announced today. In recent years, Costa Mesa's chief negotiator had been the City's administrative services director.

[Richard Kreisler](#), a partner with the Los Angeles-based [Liebert Cassidy Whitmore](#) law firm, spent the first 14 years of his 35-year career representing police and fire associations. For the past two decades, he's worked with public agencies on a wide variety of public safety issues, including labor negotiations. He will charge the City \$300 per hour.

"The employee contracts represent, by far, the largest expense in the City's budget, and hiring a professional negotiator to help us during these challenging times is a cost-effective investment for the Costa Mesa taxpayer," said City Chief Executive Officer Tom Hatch.

Per the City's Council direction, Hatch has asked the six employee associations representing City employees to renegotiate their existing contracts to help Costa Mesa financially withstand the economic downturn that's adversely affecting local governments.

And the City is currently negotiating with the Costa Mesa Firefighters Assn., which agreed last October to have its members contribute 5% of their CalPERS-eligible pay to their own pensions for one year. This contribution is set to expire next month.