

Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and Pinon Pines Metro Districts 1, 2, and 3, Dec. 4

Budgets approved; elections and wastewater rates adjustment planned

By Lisa Hatfield

The 2018 budgets were among the slew of resolutions approved on Dec. 4 by the combined boards of Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts 1, 2, and 3 (PPMD 1, 2, 3). They also discussed the upcoming board elections and decided that the February meeting will include a public wastewater rates and fees hearing.

Forest Lakes, at the western end of West Baptist Road, is a Title 32 service district in El Paso County established in 1985. FLMD is the half-acre operating district responsible for the public infrastructure and utility and general governmental services—which actually collect the property taxes—for the residents of PPMD 1, 2, and 3. FLMD holds joint board meetings with PPMD 1, 2 and 3, which were established in 2004.

Clarification on the entity boundaries: The residential sections, PPMD 1

and 2, are in unincorporated El Paso County. However, PPMD 3, the commercial section, lies mostly within the southwest town limits of Monument. One small parcel of PPMD 3 is in the county, which allows the county to have sole jurisdiction over all four of these metro districts, through their county metro district service plans. Since it is inside the town boundary, the Falcon Commerce Center portion of PPMD 3 will pay sales taxes to the town of Monument and a separate public infrastructure fee (PIF) to PPMD 3.

Note: FLMD has no relationship with the separate Forest View Acres Water District in the foothills west of Monument and north of Forest Lakes. See photo on page 14.

Board members for all four of these five-member metro district boards are President George Lenz, executive vice president of finance of Classic Homes; Secretary James Boulton, vice president/project manager of Classic

Homes; Assistant Secretary and Treasurer Doug Stimple, CEO of Classic Homes; and Assistant Secretary Joe Loidolt, president of Classic Homes. One board member vacancy exists now in each of these four boards, and elections will be held this spring.

Ann Nichols is the manager for all four districts. Attorney Russell Dykstra, district counsel for each of these four boards, and Tom Blunk of CP Real Estate Capital, representing Forest Lakes LLC and Forest Lakes Residential Development, also attended the Dec. 4 meeting.

2017 budget amended

No members of the public spoke at the hearing for an amendment to the 2017 FLMD budget. Nichols said that water, wastewater, roads, and drainage infrastructure was conveyed from Forest Lakes Residential Development LLC to FLMD, so expenses that had been budgeted for \$7.28 million would actually be \$10.2 million. She said public roads are dedicated to the county and written off the district's assets, and Blunk said the payable would be passed on to the Forest Lakes LLC.

The amended budget was approved, including an estimate of up to \$350,000 toward any initial bills from Velocity Constructors for the surface water treatment plant contract.

2018 budgets approved

The board discussed and approved eight resolutions to approve budgets and appropriate funds for the separate 2018 expenses for FLMD and PPMD 1, 2, and 3.

FLMD enterprise fund's budgeted expenditures include:

- \$593,851 – operating expenses
- \$8.385 million – capital expenditures (includes \$7.62 million for the new surface water treatment plant)
- \$1.587 million – interest on long-term debt

PPMD 1's budget included \$54,000 for operations and maintenance and \$440,000 toward debt service on 2016 bonds, Nichols said. PPMD 2 and 3 have minimal activity currently. For all the financial details, contact Nichols at 719-327-5810 or at anicholsduffy@aol.com.

Mill levies set for 2018

The board unanimously approved the resolutions to set mill levies for 2018 for FLMD and PPMD 1, 2, and 3. All four will be 11.056 mills for operations and maintenance and 44.222 for debt service. Although in 2017 the mills were 10 and 40 respectively, Stimple said the assessed valuation had dropped from 7.96 to 7.2 percent, and the board could "Gallagher-ize" the mill levies so that the amount of tax revenue from each property is constant. "It's revenue neutral to the district."

Note: For comparison, the mill levy for the neighboring Triview Metropolitan District is 35 mills, but is strictly and solely used to finance Triview debt. Triview's operational budgets have to survive on sales tax and water and wastewater rates and fees. See www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tvmd

Board self-nomination forms due March 2

Nichols said for FLMD, there is still one board vacancy open to district residents, and Boulton and Loidolt's terms are up for re-election, for a total of three four-year positions for the May 8 election. For each of PPMD 1, 2, and

3, there is also one board vacancy open to district residents, and Boulton's term is open also; both would be four-year terms.

Residents interested in running should contact Nichols at 719-327-5810 or at anicholsduffy@aol.com. Self-nomination forms are due by March 2. Dykstra said if there are not more candidates nominated than the amount of open positions, the election could be canceled by the first week in March.

Citizens Advisory Committee update

The county is currently requiring Forest Lakes, through its service plan, to attempt to create a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the search has been on since last summer. See www.ocn.me/v17n6.htm#flmd.

County Development Services Department Project Manager Ramiere Fitzpatrick has been in contact with Boulton and Nichols, but progress has been slow, Boulton said, "Even though we have homeowners that have signed up to be on this committee!"

After a discussion about the lack of purpose of the CAC and the overall lack of residents running for the current boards, the consensus was to request of Fitzpatrick that instead of creating a CAC, any district homeowner could run to fill the board vacancy this spring, or if no one new runs, the Forest Lakes homeowners' association could designate a representative to the board.

Wastewater rate adjustments hearing coming in February

Nichols said that her analysis of the commercial wastewater rate structure for the district showed that revenue would not be sufficient to cover operations and maintenance costs projected by the new Pilot Travel Center that will be built south of Baptist Road in the Falcon Commerce Center in PPMD 3. Note: Pilot's zoning, final plat, and final PD site plan were approved on Sept. 5 by the Monument Board of Trustees. See www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot.

Nichols suggested that instead of a flat monthly fee, a new structure that charges by volume should be discussed in a public hearing at the February meeting.

Nichols also recommended that the monthly residential wastewater fee increase by \$5 to \$35 per month. She will provide more justification for this cost at the February meeting, including comparisons with neighboring Triview and Donala as well as Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) fee structures. "Even though CSU is a different world," she added.

Nichols said potable water rates will stay the same for now, at \$4.50 per 1,000 gallons. In the future as the surface water treatment plant is completed and those operating costs are known, the board should discuss adjusting wa-



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