Truty, a town resident, welcomed the new board on behalf of the fire district.

New trustee appointed

On April 18, three residents presented their applications to fill the trustee position vacated by Kaiser when he was appointed to replace Mayor Rafael Dominguez after Dominguez resigned on March 29. These were Planning Commissioner Michelle Glover, Col. Dennis Murphy, and recent board candidate Kevin Sorenson. No additional applicants came forward by May 2. At the end of the May 2 meeting, the board voted to appoint Murphy with four votes. Sorenson received two votes. Glover was not nominated. Town Clerk Sirochman swore in Murphy.

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

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Monument Board of Trustees, May 16

June 9 public forum on Monument water rates planned

By Lisa Hatfield

The May 16 Monument Board of Trustees meeting lasted over three hours and included discussions about water rates, an extension of the moratorium on clinics, approval of liquor licenses, and two presentations.

After the meeting it was announced that a public forum on water rates for the Town of Monument water service area would be held at 6 p.m., Thursday, June 9 at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road.

Mayor Jeff Kaiser and Trustees Kelly Elliott, and Shea Medlicott were absent. Town Attorney Gary Shupp was also absent. Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson ran the meeting.

Trustees' comments

Most of the trustees' comments were devoted to the water rates ordinances, both the one approved on March 7 that caused rates to jump for town of Monument water customers, and the emergency ordinance (intended to rescind that rate increase) proposed by Trustee Jeff Bornstein on April 18 and voted on May 2 that did not pass. See the related Board of Trustees May 2 meeting article on page 1.

Trustee Greg Coopman's comments included:
- The May 2 vote was 4-2 but did not pass since it was drafted as an emergency ordinance and needed 75 percent approval.
- The request directing town staff to redraft the ordinance as a regular ordinance was denied by town staff at the direction of several members of this board even after the intent and political will of the board was demonstrated with a 4-2 vote in favor.
- I agree it would be counterproductive to go back and forth on the water rates and add to the community's confusion and uncertainty.
- Every day we wait, residents and business owners are being taxed by a rate increase that will inevitably be changed.
- I want to propose we set a date and time to answer the public's questions and how the numbers came about, what the capital projects are, and how much we are losing.
- If we are going to do a rate increase like what was passed earlier this year, we need to know where that is going and why and see if this is something the community is agreeable to.
- We also need to set a deadline to have multiple options presented to the board in public for accountability.

Trustee Bornstein's comments included:
- I had a very good meeting with the town manager this week and reviewed all the water rates documents and have a much better understanding.
- First, we have preventive maintenance that needs to be done now or tomorrow; we can't get around that. Second, a watertight system for the water we currently lose. Third, we need to get a water resource from outside the town, because if we don't, we are going to have issues.
- This public forum will be very important, because it is not just about a bottom-line number. It's five, six, seven, eight years from now, with potential growth. It has to be done smartly, but if we don't have water, we can't do it.
- I've got to be very honest. I'm on the fence. But I won't vote no.
- It's time to move on. We have a lot of important things unfortunately related to water to deal with. But I think there are some good options on the table.

Wilson proposed that the trustees vote again on the water rates ordinance at the board meeting following the public forum.

The consensus of the board was to schedule the public forum as soon as possible but allow time for public notification and participation. After the meeting, the town announced the extra meeting would be on Thursday, June 9 at Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Rd. at 6 p.m.