

fourth Wednesday of each month. The next two meetings are scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Nov. 15 and Dec. 6 at TLM-

FPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 484-0911. For upcoming agendas, see

<http://tlmfire.org/board>.

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Thank you so much to OCN Volunteer Joyce Witte for recording this meeting.

Monument Board of Trustees, Oct. 9 and 16

“Dreaming big” in capital improvements workshops

By Lisa Hatfield

On Oct. 9, the Monument Board of Trustees held a five-year water capital improvements plan (CIP) workshop that was a follow-up to the Sept. 18 workshop. On Oct. 16, they held a five-year general capital improvements workshop to “dream big” about parks, community centers, and ways to enhance Monument’s unique qualities. They also heard about the I-25 Gap Coalition, Land Use Planning 101, and the new Art Sites walking tour.

Trustee Shea Medlicott was absent for the Oct. 16 meeting.

Follow-up water capital improvements workshop

On Oct. 9, Town Manager Chris Lowe presented part two of his summary of the 2018 Water Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that staff suggested for Monument’s potable water service area, which is entirely on the west side of I-25. (Triview Metropolitan District and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District both supply potable water to some town residents on the east side of the highway.) For part one, see www.ocn.me/v17n10.htm#mbot0918.

“Our task is to create a sustainable, renewable water system,” he said. Staff recommended water CIP projects for the next five years are:

- Immediately find a way to manage return flows (water reuse).
- Continue pursuing the Area 3 reservoir for renewable water storage, possibly in the Home Place Ranch area of Triview.
- Acquire renewable water rights.
- Continue updating the town’s 20-year water master plan as development changes.

Lowe explained more about the new idea for water reuse, different from others mentioned this year. “We could utilize 200,000 gallons, or 40 percent of our water, that just goes over the dam every day, if we could recoup that water by doing indirect potable management of return flows.”

Town staff is proposing that, downstream from the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility, they would drill shallow alluvial wells, allowing the stream water to be filtered through the sand. Then, the town would pump the water to a new drinking water tertiary treatment plant at its property on Mitchell Avenue and Synthes Avenue. This project would cost \$5 million to \$8 million, but it would significantly increase the water available to the town and could be done relatively quickly, Lowe said.

To find out if this option will work, the first step would be to drill test wells and sample the water over the next year, both summer and winter, to see how much natural scrubbing and dilution happens between Monument Creek and the shallow alluvial wells. The design process, which would require approval from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, could start after that, Lowe said.

Lowe’s additional comments included:

- An acre-foot of water weighs 17 tons, which is a lot to pump uphill.
- If these renewable water ownership, transportation, and storage projects are delayed, the town will have no choice but to drill more wells into a declining aquifer.

- Small towns need regional partners. Woodmoor Water, Donala, and Triview have all purchased renewable water that they can’t get up here or store it up here. We need to cooperate and form a local water authority of regional partners.

The trustees asked many more questions related to Lowe’s comments, as well as more about any possibility of partnership with Forest Lakes Metropolitan District or Colorado Springs Utilities.

Trustee Greg Coopman summed up by saying, “I am incredibly optimistic. It took us awhile to get to this point.”

Lowe said, “the best way to codify and put in black and white what the board wants to commit to ... would be either to make a resolution that adopts the water CIP” including the short-, medium- and long-term projects he had discussed. Then he would have direction to start making connections related to the local water authority, for example. The consensus was to direct Town Attorney Alicia Corley to draft a resolution for their approval at the regular Oct. 16 meeting.

The mood was positive, and Lowe said, “You can be the board that started, and finished, the long-range water plan for the community. You will have secured the water rights, the process of distributing water in the most cost efficient and home-ruled entity whose profits go back into the community (instead of to Colorado Springs Utilities. You are the board that would have fulfilled the long-term water master plan.”

On Oct. 2, Town Treasurer Pamela Smith said budget workshops for the trustees and the public were scheduled for Oct. 28 and Nov. 18. She told OCN that the budget was sent to the trustees for the Oct. 2 meeting; it was not included in the board packet available online, though.

Resolution on water CIP approved 4-2

Subsequently, on Oct. 16, Lowe’s report on the resolution to ratify and adopt the town’s Water Capital Improvement Plan stated, in part, “The BOT [Board of Trustees], at the workshop session on October 9, 2017, committed to a Water Capital Improvement Plan which will direct staff efforts with respect to the Water Enterprise and 2A funds through 2022.... This document is meant to be the policy direction to staff to pursue the strategy as outlined in this memorandum and as discussed over the last couple of years.”

Coopman thanked Lowe and Tharnish for the CIP. “I think you have unanimous support on moving forward in 2018 and the big picture for how we get to those goals. But I have concerns on the verbiage of the resolution. What is intent of resolution?” He was specifically concerned with this section: “Be it resolved that ... the Board of Trustees hereby approves and adopts the Water Capital Improvement Projects as presented for the Town of Monument and by the Mayor signing, commit the resources of the Town and staff to pursue these projects as presented.”

Coopman said that was basically asking the BOT to commit financial resources to five years’ worth of projects, when in its legal role it only appropriates funds on an annual basis, and that

a sitting board could not make budget decisions for future boards.

Lowe said, “All money spent by town is subject to appropriation annually, so this just codifies that at this point in time, the board committed to a course of action. They can change that any time they would like.” However, it would be good to codify so that future boards are not ignorant of the intentions of this board, which has committed significant resources in a particular path, he said. He did not want to waste hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Trustee Dennis Murphy said he thought the five-year approach was great and would help “keep our eye on the ball,” but he had the same concerns Coopman did. He also wanted to know how these financial decisions would affect individual families’ budgets, and he asked again whether the board could receive updates from staff as they pursued other possible options with CSU.

After a long discussion and several questions to Lowe and Town Attorney Alicia Corley on whether it needed to be amended to add a provision that it was not appropriating any money for future budgets, the five-year water CIP resolution was approved 4-2 without any amendments. Coopman and Murphy voted no.

Five-year CIP workshop includes parks, community center, and more

Before the regular Oct. 16 meeting, Lowe presented a detailed list of other capital improvements the town might consider in the next five years to achieve “downtown and economic revitalization.” The goal on some of these items is not core services for municipal operations but to engage in “placemaking,” or determining what unique characteristic set the town apart from other communities. “We want people to live, play, and work in this community,” he said.

Some of his and Public Works Director Tom Tharnish’s ideas included:

- A \$2.8 million public works facility (possibly combined with drinking water treatment plant) in 2018
- \$200,000 toward a splash park at Limbach Park with help from a hoped-for GOCO grant
- Recreation updates (and a new name!) for Park Trail Park in 2018
- Annual streets overlay/chip seal work of \$300,000 to \$500,000 from 2018 to 2022
- Permanent bathrooms at Monument Lake in 2018
- A \$3 million to \$5 million combined “community and senior center,” which multiple generations could appreciate, in 2019
- \$1 million for trails and open space in 2020

Lowe said the board would officially direct any of the projects to begin via the upcoming two budget workshops and budget approval for 2018.

Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson clarified that no town projects were planned for the Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, or Sanctuary Pointe neighborhoods, since those are under the purview of Triview Metropolitan District.

Lowe said he and Tharnish had met with Triview’s new interim District Manager Jim McGrady. “He is a huge believer in partnerships, and we

are already talking about economies of scale, such as parks maintenance. We will work on cooperating more fully. I am excited for the opportunity to work with that board and their new manager.” See related Triview article on page 1.

I-25 Gap Coalition

Wilson introduced El Paso County Commissioner Mark Waller, who expressed optimism about the process of widening I-25 from County Line Road to Castle Rock. He said, “local commitment through ballot issues” and “shovel-ready projects” created a huge advantage on the chances getting millions of dollars in federal funding.

Waller said, “I think we are in pretty darn good shape” and predicted that construction to widen I-25 to three lanes north of Monument could begin in fall 2019.

Note: The Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development and Visitor Center Board of Directors voted at its most recent meeting to support two measures: El Paso County measure 1A allows taxes raised in excess of TABOR limits to go toward the I-25 Corridor Gap improvement project, disaster recovery projects, and parks, trails, and open space projects. Measure 5B would adjust how Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) spends its revenue and add the I-25 Gap to the list of projects.

Land use planning workshop coming Jan. 8

At the request of the BOT, staff is putting together a workshop called “Planning 101: An Overview of the Development Review Process from Start to Finish.” It will instruct the trustees, planning commissioners, and board of adjustment members, and other interested parties such as the Grow Smart Monument group.

The trustees requested that it also include strategies on how to shape growth and actually fulfill the vision of the community while still adhering to the legal parameters of quasi-judicial land use decision-making.

Upcoming land use projects

Part of Lowe’s town manager report included a list of projects headed for the Planning Commission and/or BOT over the next few months. They include, but are not limited to:

- Wagons West Annexation, a residential development
- Nexus, an office warehouse project
- Sanctuary Pointe, a residential development
- Dukes request, a proposal to purchase town property
- Mikulas, a determination of permitted use.

Financial report and checks over \$5,000

The third-quarter financial report was approved as part of the consent agenda, as were these checks:

- Triview Metropolitan District, sales and motor vehicle taxes - \$207,606
- Triview, property tax - \$250,606
- Green Electric Co., radium removal - \$8,634
- Lytle Water Solutions LLC, professional services 2A water - \$6,034
- CIRSA Insurance - \$18,278
- CIRSA Insurance - \$20,056