

The new wage schedule was approved unanimously. "This substantial increase will get our guys up to average wage (\$52,496). We expect a significant impact in hiring and retention now that salaries are more competitive than we have been in the Front

Range," Truty said.

Note: This topic is completely separate from the Town of Monument Police Department pay raise discussed in the Monument Board of Trustees Dec. 2 and Dec. 4 articles on pages 1 and 6.

Board elections coming in 2018

Three director positions are up for election in the May 2018 election. TLMFD will find out in January if President Jake Shirk, Treasurer Hildebrandt, and Secretary Mike Smaldino will submit self-nomination forms to run again and if any other district residents will also run for the TLMFPD board.

Truty said the last board election had only a 9 percent return on the mail ballots, so he is considering doing a polling place election in 2018 to save money, possibly coordinating polling places with other special districts also holding elections in May.

Kudos to TLMFPD

Truty and Hildebrandt both spoke high praises for the new situation in TLMFPD since district residents approved the mill levy increase.

Truty thanked the board and said TLMFD had "turned a corner." He commended the top-notch emergency services and firefighting staff who have done so much extra work and continued to shine despite hurdles. "Room for improvement exists, but we don't plan to rest on past accomplishments."

Hildebrandt reviewed his time with TLMFPD, which began in 1997 with a total budget of \$147,000 for the then-named Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District. At that time, neighboring districts Woodmoor-Monument, Wescott, and Palmer Lake "were ganging

up on us," but he and Charlie Pocock persisted and did "as much as we could with what we had." He said he is thrilled to see the department go forward now.

For information back as far as 2002, see the *Our Community News* website at www.ocn.me and search for any desired keywords surrounded by a pair of quotation marks and click on the "All Words" button in the upper-right portion of the OCN home page to learn more about the tempestuous battles between the local fire districts.

Unanticipated fire engine repair needed

Deputy Chief Randy Trost explained that one of the district's fire engines needs a brand-new motor that will cost \$50,000, which the district had not been planning on spending until 2019.

Truty said the cost could be absorbed in the 2018 budget, which includes \$245,000 in a vehicle replacement line item that has been created using some of the mill levy increase.

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Jan. 24 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 484-0911. For upcoming agendas, see <http://tlmfire.org/board>. Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

MONUMENT (Cont. from page 1)

After two hours of discussion on Dec. 2, the trustees unanimously voted to approve the resolution setting the new annual base salary for a police officer. Those numbers could be revised in the draft budget, and they were prepared to vote on the final budget at the next meeting. See related Dec. 4 article on page 6.

Base salary resolution discussed and approved

The resolution setting the annual base salary for a police officer position in the Town of Monument was initially included in the consent agenda for the meeting, which is ordinarily approved without discussion. But Mayor Pro-Tem Don Wilson made a motion to move that item to the regular meeting agenda so it could be discussed after the workshop on the proposed budget. This motion was approved by a 4-3 vote, with Trustees Jeff Bornstein, Greg Coopman, and Shea Medlicott voting against Wilson's motion.

Smith then presented ideas she and Town Manager Chris Lowe suggested to remove certain items from the budget to be able to add almost \$200,000 for the increase in police officer base salary, if the trustees approved that, and still allow the budget to be balanced as required by state statute.

On Nov. 20, Smith had said that the trustees should come to the Dec. 2 meeting with their own

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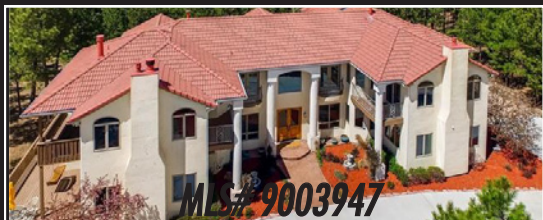
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