

has done a tremendous job. Truty went on to say, "TLMFPD are still open to moving forward and we welcome and value what Wescott can offer our community once all questions have been answered." Vice President Roger Lance added, "A merger would be an asset to El Paso County and both communities. It is good for everybody—it's a win, win!"

Chief's report

Truty's comments included:

- Gallagher legislation to stabilize revenue was remarkably successful across the state with most districts passing by over two-thirds of the margin.
- Mark Young Construction's enthusiastic bid for the Station 1 remodel was accepted.
- A new ambulance with a Stryker Powerload

system is now on order with an expected delivery in March.

- LIFEPAK 15 monitor/defibrillator units have now been received at TLMFPD. Battalion Chief Lt. Mike Keough updated the board on the progress of the six-member committee tasked to explore upgrading the district's extrication equipment.

Battalion Chief Jamey Bumgarner described the implementation of FirstNet, a more reliable public safety nationwide cellular technology, at a cost savings of \$350 per month. Truty said, "This is a big deal for us. We are the first in El Paso County to switch to FirstNet."

Peer Support Program available

Administrative Assistant Jennifer Martin an-

nounced that TLMFPD Peer Support Program is finally here. Stephanie Soll is the program coordinator and Dr. Judith Long of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs will begin the four sessions for all shifts in December. Overtime pay will be available for staff participating in the training workshops. "Small steps right now," said Martin.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Dec. 5 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 484-9011. For upcoming agendas, see <http://tlm-fire.org/board>.

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El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Oct. 30, Nov.6, 13, and 15

Approval for Mountain Springs Recovery site development plan; updated water and county master plans progress

By Helen Walklett

During November, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the site development plan for the proposed Mountain Springs Recovery facility at the former Ramada Inn site on Woodmoor Drive. The board received an update on the new water master plan and approved the award of the contract for consulting services for the development of the new county master plan. Decisions were also made relating to the Highway 105 project and the Forest Lakes development.

Mountain Springs Recovery site development plan approved

On Nov. 7, El Paso County's Department of Planning and Community Development approved the site development plan for the proposed Mountain Springs Recovery drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility at the former Ramada Inn site on Woodmoor Drive. Since the property was rezoned to C-2 in 2014, which allows for a rehabilitation facility, there was no requirement for a public hearing for the application at either the El Paso County Planning Commission or the BOCC. Instead, the application was reviewed and decided by county staff.

Speaking at a heated neighborhood meeting about the proposed facility in August, Craig Dossey, executive director of the Planning and Community Development Department, said he thought it "more than likely" that any decision to approve the site development plan would be appealed and that he was working with the county attorney's office to outline the appeals process. (See www.ocn.me/v18n9.htm#rehabfacility.)

The interim procedure for appeals under the county's land development code, approved by the BOCC at its Oct. 11 meeting, does not allow any party to appeal an approved site development plan. However, it does allow an appeal on a specific determination included within the site development plan approval. Specifically, the county's determination that the use meets the definition of a "Rehabilitation Facility" as defined in the El Paso County Land Development Code (2018) and which is based on documents submitted by the applicant could be appealed by an aggrieved party.

An appeal application would need to be made within 30 days (by Dec. 7) of the site development plan's approval and would need to meet the requirements outlined in the procedures manual. Under these procedures, an appeal would be heard by the county commissioners. (See www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm#epbocc.) As of Nov. 26, the county confirmed that no such appeal had been received.

Sunshine Behavioral Health, the company behind the project, still requires a Colorado license to operate the facility as well as building permits from the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department before renovations can start. Last month, the board of the Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District voted unanimously to provide the facility with the supplemental water service it had requested. (See www.ocn.me/v18n11.htm#wwsd.)

New water and county master plans progress

At the Nov. 13 BOCC meeting, the commissioners received an update on the county's work on developing and adopting a new water master plan from Dossey and Mark Gebhart, deputy director of Planning and Community Development.

The county has been working with a consultant to develop the plan for more than a year, and published its draft master plan online on Nov. 6 for agency and public review. "It's still in draft form, we're still taking comments from the public, but we are planning on taking it to the planning commission, which is the final approval authority ... in December," Dossey said.

Gebhart explained that getting the plan to this draft stage had begun with an invitation for public input, which received 378 responses and enabled the county to identify important themes. A steering committee then worked on an internal version, and revisions were made prior to an open house that took place in October. Gebhart said the open house was well attended, with about 60 members of the public present, the majority from the northern and northeastern parts of the county.

The plan aims to provide an understanding of current water supply and demand, identify possible efficiency opportunities, and encourage best practice in water demand management and conservation. It will also implement local aspects of the state's water plan. The draft plan states that its implementation "will help ensure that land use decisions are based on balancing efficient use of limited water supplies with the water needs of current and future residents." Gebhart said that the plan will also enable cooperation with water providers in their water planning efforts.

"The challenge is the county doesn't own the water supply," he said. "The county can't really tell the districts how to do it, but we can support those districts that do improve their water efficiency and have water conservation plans."

As the water plan will become part of the new county master plan, which is currently under development, it will ensure the integration of water supply into short- and long-range land use planning. It will also provide the basis for the review of planned water supplies for new development.

Gebhart said he anticipates the plan could potentially trigger some modifications to the land use and landscaping regulations in the future as well as discussions regarding the county's 300-year water rule. He thought there will likely also be future discussions about whether water sufficiency considerations can be moved to earlier in the planning application process to create a better decision-making process for the planning commission and BOCC. The current planning process considers water sufficiency at the final plat stage of development applications.

Following the presentation, commissioners' comments centered on the current lack of quantitative data on aquifer levels available to them

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