

sign shirts for the event, Coopman said. She also gave the council a report on the planning for the town's Fourth of July fireworks celebration.

#### Work on ordinances continues

Ordinance Number 6 of 2018, to approve a minor subdivision of block 18 of Glen Park, consisting of five lots, was tabled pending further review.

Ordinance Number 7 of 2018, to add a new chapter to the town's code governing backflow prevention and cross-connections in the town's water system, was approved unanimously.

Ordinance Number 8 of 2018, to regulate open burning restrictions within the town, was tabled until the May 10 meeting.

#### Special event liquor license granted

Acting as the Palmer Lake Liquor and Marijuana Licensing Authority, the council granted a special event liquor license to an event put on by the Awake the Lake Committee, which was held on April 14 at the Pinecrest Event Center.

#### Future council meetings to begin at 6 p.m.

Electing to return to their previous meeting time, the council voted to begin future meetings at 6 p.m.

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The two meetings for May will be at 6 p.m. on May 10 and 24 at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

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### El Paso County Planning Commission, April 17

## Rezoning and subdivision approval recommended for a Wakonda Hills property

By Helen Walklett

At its April 17 meeting, the El Paso County Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of a rezoning and subdivision request made by Matthew and Jenna Arvidson relating to a 5.45-acre parcel of land located west of Beacon Lite Road and north of Wakonda Way north of Monument.

The rezoning was from RR-5 (Residential Rural)

to RR-2.5 (Residential Rural). A minor subdivision to split the 5.45-acre parcel into a 2.14-acre lot and a 2.33-acre lot and to dedicate right-of-way along Beacon Lite Road and Wakonda Way was approved at the same time. As the two lots would not meet the minimum lot size requirement of 2.5 acres due to the right-of-way dedication, administrative relief of the lot size requirement was granted in March. The county noti-

fied eight adjoining properties and received one response, which was in favor of the action.

The application is now scheduled to be heard at the Board of County Commissioners' meeting on May 8.

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### El Paso Board of County Commissioners, March 29, April 10, 12, 17, and 19

## Wildfires remain a real danger; I-25 widening update

By Helen Walklett

The El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) continued to highlight the danger of wildfires throughout their meetings in April. At the April 12 meeting, Commissioner Stan VanderWerf gave an update on the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) director's current thinking on the widening of the I-25 between Castle Rock and Monument.

#### Wildfire danger

At the April 19 meeting of the BOCC, two days after the Sheriff's Office imposed Stage 2 fire restrictions, the commissioners received an update on the 117 wildfire burning south of Colorado Springs in El Paso and Pueblo counties and thanked firefighters, staff and volunteers for their efforts in fighting the fire.

Commissioner Longinos Gonzalez urged citizens to take the fire restrictions seriously. He said, "This is going to be a very dangerous fire season I believe. I and others have been talking about this for several months because of the dry winter that we have had, and I see too many people not taking it seriously."

Commissioner VanderWerf again urged citizens to be prepared, saying, "It looks like, unless we have a wet June ... we are on our way to maybe the worst fire season in history in El Paso County. If you have fire risk at your property, deal with it now. Do it now before it's too late. It's very, very important."

The Sheriff's Office ordered Stage 2 fire restrictions on April 17 for the unincorporated areas of the county due to the 117 wildfire and the high fire danger. The restrictions were returned to Stage 1 on April 23. Stage 1 restrictions prohibit:

- Open burning, except for fires and campfires within permanently constructed fire grates, charcoal grills, and wood burning stoves in developed campgrounds and picnic grounds and at private residences in areas cleared of all flammable materials. Outdoor cooking on private property is permitted where contained within fireplaces, fire pits, or barbecues less than 3 feet in diameter and 2 feet high.
- The sale or use of fireworks.
- Public prescribed burning/burn permits.
- Outdoor smoking except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.

Bill Elder, county sheriff, attended the April 10 BOCC meeting to introduce Jim Schanel, the county's newly-appointed deputy fire warden, who has assumed overall responsibility for the fight against wildfires. Elder said, "He brings an immense amount of knowledge and expertise to fighting fires." Elder also told the commissioners that a contract had been signed with the Global SuperTanker for this fire season, saying, "Let's keep our fingers crossed that we never get to the point that we need [it] but at least the contract is in place should we need it."

#### I-25 widening

At the April 12 BOCC meeting, Commissioner VanderWerf reported that he had attended a Pikes

Peak Area Council of Governments meeting where he had had a conversation with Mike Lewis, director of CDOT, concerning the I-25 expansion. Commissioner VanderWerf said that Lewis was still convinced that the way forward was to toll the third lane. Lewis had also said there was no requirement for a fourth lane at this time but that the highway would be designed so that one could be added later. VanderWerf stated he disagreed with Lewis' view, saying, "There are several of us that have been pushing for four lanes considering the growth that we expect to have in our community. There is absolutely a requirement for four lanes and maybe it's about time we start planning for the future instead of just catching up from the past." He encouraged citizens to contact CDOT to make their views known.

#### Flying Horse North

At their March 29 meeting, the commissioners went into executive session at the request of the County Attorney's Office to receive legal advice concerning a possible waiver or subdivision exemption in the Flying Horse North subdivision. When the commissioners reconvened, it was stated that direction had been given but that no official action had been taken.

The Flying Horse North rezoning from 5-acre lots to Planned Unit Development was approved by the BOCC at its Dec. 13, 2016 meeting. The planned golf

course development will encompass 1,417 acres, bordered by State Highway 83 on the west and Black Forest Road on the east. (see <http://www.ocn.me/v17n1.htm?#bocc>)

#### Other decisions

- April 10—approval of a variance of use request by John Hotchkiss to allow the operation of a professional office on a 2.28-acre property zoned RR-2.5 (Residential Rural) and located north of Old Ranch Road and about half a mile east of Voyager Parkway.
- April 17—approval of an application for preliminary acceptance of certain streets within the Forest Lakes Filing No. 2A subdivision into the county road maintenance system following completion and inspection of public improvements. The streets are Blue Pearl Court, Pelican Bay Drive, and Lake Mist Drive.
- April 17—approval of the award of a construction contract and purchase order to RMC Consultants Inc. for drainage improvements at the Black Forest Regional Park for the Community Service Department/ Parks Division at a cost not to exceed \$147,190.

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### Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations, March 10

## Message is clear: Conserve now for the future of Colorado

By Jennifer Kaylor

Amber Shanklin, Pikes Peak Region conservation director of the Palmer Land Trust, and Susan Davies, executive director of the Trails and Open Space Coalition, discussed the virtues of preserving trails and open space at the March 10 meeting of the Northern El Paso County Coalition of Community Associations (NEPCO). Vice President Tom Vierzba, Treasurer Greg Lynd, and Secretary Bob Swedenburg provided reports.

#### Trails rise as high priority

"Trails are key.... People love trails, people want trails ... and they want more connected trails," Davies emphasized. Many residents of Colorado are considered "ultra-users" and families surviving on tight budgets can access the low-to-no-cost health and recreation benefits of parks and trails. Well-maintained parks and trails also add to the property value of surrounding homes. Serving as the public's eyes, ears, and voice, the coalition advocates for and promotes stewardship of area parks and trails.

Conservation, good for the present and future Shanklin explained that the Palmer Land Trust uses conservation easements to protect private and public land in perpetuity. The easements are voluntary legal



**Above:** Pikes Peak Region Conservation Director of the Palmer Land Trust Amber Shanklin explains the role of the Palmer Land Trust in conserving land and how it relates to Coloradans who live in the Pikes Peak region to members of the Northern El Paso County Association of Community Associations. Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.

documents that place restrictions on property and give the land trust authority to enforce the restrictions. Palmer Land Trust focuses on protecting land that fits into three categories: outdoor recreation areas, scenic views, and robust working farms and ranches.