

was drafted to raise \$50,000 from recreational sales if voters chose to make recreational sales legal in November.

The council voted unanimously to place the initiative to tax recreational sales on the ballot in November.

Council and residents take steps to improve fire safety

At the Town Council meeting in June, Cressman and council member Mitchell Davis announced that they had opened discussions about merging the Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department (PLVFD) with the much-larger Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD). Cressman went on to point out that PLVFD did not have a fire chief or a paramedic on staff, and its fire station was not up to code.

At the July 26 meeting, the council voted to approve a contract with Emergency Services Consulting International to do in-depth research into the town's fire services, including what it would cost for PLVFD to remain independent and how the town might transition to service provided by TLMFPD. The cost of the analysis cannot exceed \$20,321, according to the contract.

All council members present voted to approve the contract except Havenar, who felt the approach favored consolidation and wanted to go on record that she supports an independent fire department for Palmer Lake.

At the July 26 working session, the council returned to its effort to update the ordinance that defines what types of outdoor fires are permitted in the town of Palmer Lake. Progress on drafting the ordinance was slow, as council members struggled to define basic terms and to develop precise definitions of different kinds of outdoor burning. Town Councilor Gary Faust

led the discussion.

Residents Judith Harrington and Reid Wiecks announced that they had organized a free "chipping day" on Sunday, Aug. 19 at Glen Park from 1 to 3 p.m. Residents can bring slash and trimmings up to 6 inches in diameter to be chipped, and the chips will be used in the playground area at Glen Park. The chipper and personnel to run it will be provided by the Coalition for the Upper South Platte, they said.

Harrington and Wiecks also said free reflective number signs, designed to help emergency vehicles locate an address, were available through a grant. PLVFD will install the reflective numbers, they said. Residents who would like the reflective numbers can request them using a link on the town's website (www.townofpalmerlake.com/fire/webform/sign-have-reflective-numbers-your-home).

Also at the July 12 meeting, the council voted unanimously to approve a waiver of conflict of interest to the law firm of Widener Juran, which enables Town Attorney Maureen Juran to continue to work for the town of Palmer Lake on issues relating to the future of the PLVFD, even though the firm also works for TLMFPD. Cressman said having Juran involved in the discussion about PLVFD would save the town the cost of hiring another lawyer.

Concert at The Villa has neighbors up in arms

At the July 26 meeting, a number of residents complained to the board that a musical performance at The Villa was over-amplified and too loud. Several also mentioned foul language used by some of the performers. Residents called both the police and The Villa to complain and, in at least one case, went to the restaurant in person to register their complaints, but the complainants did not feel the restaurant owner or the concert promoter took appropriate action.

Mike Bailey, general manager of Tri Lakes Radio and the organizer of the concert, apologized to the council and the residents who had come to complain and said one of his goals was to use the concert to promote the town to potential visitors. Bailey's comments prompted Banta to say that he and many others moved to Palmer Lake because it was "quiet, peaceful and tranquil," and that he did not want to see the town promoted at the expense of those values. A number of those present applauded Banta's remarks.

Audit shows health, progress

David Green of Green and Associates presented the results of his audit for the town's 2017 finances. The audit for 2017 was smoother than previous au-

dit because the staff was better prepared, he said.

Some of the deficiencies mentioned in previous audit have been corrected, and he expected more progress in the 2018 audit, Green said.

Green said the audit gave the town an "unmodified opinion," a sign of good financial processes and financial health.

According to the audit report, as of Dec. 31, 2017, the town's General Fund had a balance of \$1,730,278, an increase of \$441,948 from the previous year. The Water Fund had a balance of \$3,370,229, a decrease of \$85,676 from the previous year.

The board voted unanimously to accept the audit report presented by Green.

The two meetings for August will be at 6 p.m. on Aug. 9 and Aug. 23 at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, with the second meeting organized as a working session. Information: 481-2953.

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Monument Planning Commission, July 11

Wagons West development, Conexus business park plan recommended for approval

By Kate Pangelinan

The Monument Planning Commission (MPC) on July 11 discussed two proposed items—the Final PD Site Plan and Final Plat for the Wagons West development, and a Major Adjustment to the Preliminary PD Site Plan for the Conexus business park. Commissioners David Gwisdalla, Michelle Glover, Kenneth Kimple, and Daniel Ours were in attendance, along with Chairman Ed DeLaney. The meeting lasted roughly two hours, and both items were approved. These proposals will now be discussed by the Board of Trustees.

Wagons West

The Wagons West residential project is located on the west side of Old Denver Road, north of the Monument Ice Rinks. It spans 34.7 acres and was approved for annexation, Planned Devel-

opment zoning and a Preliminary PD Site Plan on Dec. 4, 2017.

The plan discussed at the July 11 meeting was consistent with the previous proposal, with only minor changes. There would still be 131 residential lots on this property, with 54 designed in an attached single-family style and 77 townhomes in triplex and fourplex formats. Fourteen acres of undisturbed land/creek would remain. It is hoped that this development will begin to provide more affordable housing options for the town. Wagons West's developer was represented by Andrea Barlow of NES Inc.

Commissioner Glover expressed concern about how to ensure the promised duplexes and triplexes are built, given that those terms aren't defined in Monument's current code. Other discussions about the Wagons West development itself included concerns about the lack of sidewalks along Old Denver Road—and the possibility of extra traffic/speeding cars causing difficulties—as well as analyzing whether there would be a sufficient number of turn lanes into the property.

Glover was also strongly opposed to the idea of another government entity/special district being formed to serve the Wagons West development. The applicant intends to form one, and when asked why they would pursue a metro district instead of a homeowners association, Barlow explained that the intention would be to gather money for improvements to the development. Glover posed that increasing the number of metro districts/taxation forces operating in Monument is contrary to the ideals expressed in the town's Comprehensive Plan. However, as the creation of metro districts is not a matter brought before the Planning Commis-

sion, Planning Director Larry Manning noted that time is being set aside for the Board of Trustees to discuss the possibility of a metro district in the Wagons West development.

In the end, the Wagons West Final PD Site Plan and Final Plat passed 4-1, with Glover voting against. She noted a special concern along with her vote, stating her opposition to any metro district with ongoing taxation authority on the property, on the basis that such an entity would be contrary to the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. See related *Monument Board of Trustees article on page 13*. Also see www.ocn.me/v18n1.htm#mbot1204.

Conexus

The Conexus business park development is located across Old Denver Road from the Wagons West development. It is 23.34 acres and was previously approved by the Board of Trustees in February 2017. The amendment proposed at this July 11 meeting would add one use to the already approved list of uses for this property. Specifically, the applicant intends to allow the construction of religious facilities and institutions in the business park, as long as they wouldn't occupy more than 25 percent of the development. See www.ocn.me/v18nconexus#mpc.

A revised traffic study was conducted to represent potential changes stemming from this amendment, which indicated a slight reduction in expected traffic. Any specific religious institution would still have to bring its project before the MPC and then the Board of Trustees before beginning construction. Apparently, a Christian church has expressed interest in purchasing a 5-acre lot on this development.

Points raised by the commissioners



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Herb Kaighan is an author, provides spiritual direction, and leads Twelve Step workshops and retreats throughout the world. In his books, *"Twelve Steps to a Spiritual Awakening"* and *"Practicing the Here and Now"*, Herb shares his insights using his own experience of Traditional and 12 Step Spirituality.

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