

liams said his latest understanding was they were back to planning for a roundabout at the intersection with Walker Road rather than a T-intersection. It will be one of three ways to get onto the property.

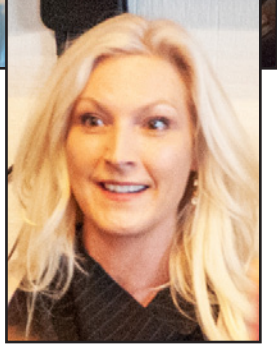
Responding to speculation about the land purchase, McWilliams noted that 69 acres of land had originally been purchased from D38 by Matt Dunston, who planned to donate about 20 acres to MA. Monument Academy agreed to pay a \$3 million share of the infrastructure cost for the whole property. The bond purchaser set a cap on infrastructure at \$1.5 million but, as a solution, allowed MA to “purchase” the land for the remaining \$1.5 million. Dunston then donated the property to MA Infrastructure LLC, which would receive the \$1.5 million purchase price from MA and apply that money to a portion of the \$3 million worth of infrastructure. MA’s share of the infrastructure cost is now determined to be much more than \$3 million, partly due to the interchange modifications. However,

Dunston is not requesting more money from the Phase One construction budget. McWilliams said that MA has effectively obtained the land “better than free.”

**COO finalist interviewed**

The MA nominating committee interviewed the top four candidates and selected Herrera to recommend for the position of COO of Monument Academy. Herrera spoke about her background teaching in Arizona for three years, heading a parochial school in Colorado Springs, and moving on to the position of headmaster at Rocky Mountain Classical Academy until May of this year.

She spoke of her background in art and work as an author and illustrator. Herrera answered questions from the board on her philosophy of Exceptional Student Services, goals, technology integration, overcoming budget difficulties, teacher evaluations, handling employee dismissals, team building, and how she liked to work with the School Board.



**Above:** Monument Academy held its October board meeting at Wesley Owens Coffee shop where Chief Operating Officer finalist Christianna Herrera (pictured at right) answered questions from board members and attendees before an overflow crowd. From left are board member Dwayne Cooke, COO finalist Christianna Herrera, and board member Mike Molsen. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

She indicated that a school should be open to and serve every child, she would start by getting to know the community, and that students have to know how to use technology to express their ideas and innovations. She spoke of being a good steward and working with parents to stretch resources while saving for future purchases. Herrera shared her experience being evaluated and said teachers are professionals who should have the freedom to take risks. She preferred to be proactive with employee situations and honor an employee’s needs over the organization. She enjoys breaking bread with her team and occasionally stepping in to teach.

A parent asked about iPads use and parental involvement on the curriculum committee. Herrera acknowledged the challenges of technology but also felt that you should allow and trust children to use it appropriately but have a system to deal with violations. She feels a curriculum committee with administration, teachers, faculty, and parents lets parents learn what expert educators believe is a good curricular choice and how to support students at home.

After a special board meeting on Oct. 25, MA issued a press release announcing the hiring of Herrera as COO.

**Highlights**

The following items were highlighted at the board meeting:

- Josh Brethauer reported on the Oct. 24 banquet to help fund MA’s new SRO Officer Josie Haag.
- The School Accountability Advisory Committee (SAAC) met on Sept. 23 to discuss last year’s performance, testing participation levels and how testing scores are evaluated and communicated. Dean Charlie Richardson led the review of SAAC bylaws, and SAAC positions of chair, vice chair, secretary, and public member were filled.
- Chris Dole spoke on the launch of the Watch D.O.G.S (Dads of Great Students) program intended to get male role models involved with the school.
- Mark Brocklehurst was introduced as the new finance director, taking over for Nancy Tive.
- After the meeting, comments were made regarding screen time and its relationship to mental health as well as concern about the terms of the bond to pay for MA’s secondary school.

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The next meeting will be on Thursday, Nov. 14 at the Monument Academy library at 1150 Village Ridge Point. The MA School Board usually meets at 6 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Information on the MA School Board, including schedule, minutes, committee and finances can be found at <http://www.monumentacademy.net/school-board>.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).

**Phyllis Hudgins Bacalis**



**Phyllis Hudgins Bacalis**

**Oct. 23, 1922 – Oct. 25, 2019**

Phyllis Hudgins Bacalis died on October 25, 2019 in Castle Rock, CO after an illness. She was 97 years old.

Phyllis was born October 23, 1922 in Norfolk, Virginia, to Mr. & Mrs. Hugh M. Hudgins. She lived there until her marriage to her beloved husband of 73 years, Paul N. Bacalis.

Phyllis and Paul enjoyed a military lifestyle for 32 years as he was a career Air Force officer. During their career, they traveled extensively and enjoyed many exciting adventures worldwide. She mentioned on several occasions

that she enjoyed every day of her life and “would not change a minute of it.”

Mrs. Bacalis was a very loving and generous person to all. She supported several charities including Pikes Peak Hospice & Palliative Care and The Humane Society.

She especially enjoyed her large family, which includes 2 sons, 7 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren, and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Mrs. Bacalis was preceded in death by her husband Major General Paul N. Bacalis, USAF (Ret), and is survived in death by sons Paul H. Bacalis and Perry L. Bacalis and their families.

A celebration of her life will be held on **November 8, 2019** at one o’clock in the afternoon at St. Matthias Episcopal Church, 18320 Furrow Road, Monument, CO 80132. A brief reception will be held immediately following the celebration at the Woodmoor Country Club, 18945 Pebble Beach Way, Monument, CO 80132.

In lieu of flowers, we ask that donations be made in her name to Pikes Peak Hospice and Palliative Care, 2550 Tenderfoot Hill Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80906.



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**Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education, Oct. 28**

By Harriet Halbig

The October meeting of the Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education was held on Oct. 28, which was after the deadline for articles in *Our Community News*.

The November meeting of the board will be on Monday, Nov. 18 at 6 p.m. in the district’s Learning Center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. See the December issue of *OCN* for details about both meetings.

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