

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Oct. 15

Seven promoted, including one new lieutenant

By Allison Robenstein

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board held a very speedy meeting on Oct. 15 after seven firefighters were promoted. The board scheduled the 2020 budget public hearing for the Dec. 3 meeting. A new officer academy was discussed, the board's bylaws are nearly ready, and the chiefs gave updates on call volume and calls for service during red flag days.

Board Chairman William "Bo" McAllister and Treasurer Joyce Hartung were excused. Attorney Michelle Ferguson filled in for the district's attorney, Matt Court.

2020 budget hearing scheduled for December 3

During the Sept. 17 meeting, Chief Vinny Burns had provided the board with a preliminary look at the 2020 budget, and tonight board members asked a few questions about details, but Burns said he will give them a more in-depth review at the November meeting. When this reporter asked for a copy of the draft budget, Burns said it would be available to the public in November since it is still a work in progress.

DWFPD will hold the public budget hearing at the Dec. 3 meeting.

Promotion ceremony

Seven crew members were promoted before the meeting and then sworn in during the regular session. Eric Bogenrief was promoted to lieutenant. As the highest-ranking person on shift, he will be responsible for all the crew members on duty, lots of paperwork, and, according to Burns, the most important question of all, "What's for dinner?"

Three new driver engineers, Shawn Ballard, Brian Kirkpatrick, and Lucas Owens, will be responsible for all apparatus for their 48 hours on duty. This includes not just truck maintenance but ensuring all other components required to fight a fire are working properly. "They own it," said Burns.

Three new full-time volunteer firefighters, Chris Bricker, Josh McDonald, and Brett Rubidoux, all passed their promotional testing and hold the values of this Fire Department, according to Burns.

Officer academy

Capt. Sean Pearson said the staff has been working to create an officer academy intended to teach proper techniques for filling out reports, training logs, and human resources-related documents. Pearson said there will be leadership and tactical modules, as



Above Just before the October board meeting, Eric Bogenrief was promoted to lieutenant. Chief Vinny Burns holds an officer helmet destined for Bogenrief, right. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

well as guest speakers who are subject matter experts. He said all the newly promoted officers would attend the Colorado Officer Leadership symposiums at the Colorado State Fire Chiefs Fire Leadership Challenge in Keystone on Oct. 22-25.

Chief's report

Burns said the Fire Department had raised over \$5,500 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association during Fill the Boot in September.

Assistant Chief Scott Ridings said the 74 calls for services in September were an increase of 41% over September 2018.

Director Larry Schwarz asked the chiefs how they run calls when there are continuous red flag "high fire danger" days. Both chiefs said they are careful to include additional equipment on calls so they are prepared to fight a wildfire.

Burns said the county is in Stage 1 burn restrictions due to the extremely dry conditions, which means the following are prohibited:

1. Open fire and open burning except fires and campfires within permanently constructed fire grates, charcoal grills and wood burning stoves in developed campgrounds and picnic grounds, or private residences in areas cleared of all flammable materials.
2. The sale or use of fireworks.



Above: Volunteer firefighters (from left) Chris Bricker, Josh McDonald and Brett Rubidoux are sworn in as full-time volunteers by board Secretary Mark Gunderman. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*



Above: Driver Engineer Shawn Ballard said it best as he thanked his family for allowing him to endeavor in "this crazy, wild dream I've been chasing!" He is standing to the left with Brian Kirkpatrick, center, and Lucas Owens to his right. *Photo by Allison Robenstein.*

3. 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 of and cleared of all flammable materials.

Board bylaws

McAllister had tasked the board with creating board bylaws since none exist currently. Over the last few months, they have been working with Court to define the document, and tonight Schwarz said he felt it was ready for a final review and a vote at the November meeting.

During public comments, resident Steve Simpson requested a copy of the draft board bylaws before the board votes on it.

"The more transparent you can be, the better public investment," said Simpson. Director Duane Garrett asked if public comments would be considered and if that would extend the time-

line. Secretary Mark Gunderman said in the spirit of transparency, he was willing to allow for public review now that the draft has been worked on so much by the board and attorneys.

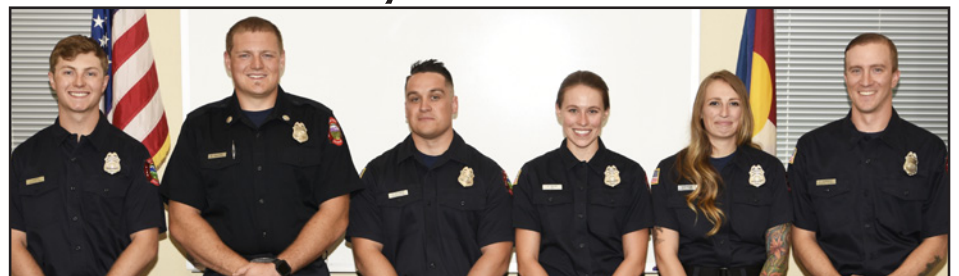
Ferguson suggested the staff decide either to provide a copy upon request or put the document on the website. The consensus was that, instead of asking the public to make a CORA request to see it, the draft board bylaws will be posted on the Wescott site under the Board of Directors and board member tabs. It is there now for review.

The next DWFPD meetings are scheduled for Nov. 19 and Dec. 3 at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. For information, call Stacey Popovich at 488-8680 or see www.wescottfire.org.

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Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, Oct. 23

Part-timers become full-time; Flying Horse North lacks hydrants



Above: From left, Firefighter/EMT Taylor Kurtz, Lt. Ben Rackl, Firefighter/EMT Carlos Pittman, EMT Heather Heath, Firefighter/Paramedic Ashley Triplett and Firefighter/EMT Daniel Grodman take the oath administered by Vice Chairman David Hoffpauir (not pictured) and receive their badges at Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District's Station 1 during a ceremony on Oct. 4. *Photo by David Bottorff.*

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) board meeting Oct. 23, the board received a request

to convert two part-time firefighter/paramedics to full-time, learned that fire hydrants were not requested or installed at Flying Horse North, and dis-

Alpaca Holiday Extravaganza

Join the Southeastern Colorado Alpaca Breeders celebration of the 14th Annual Holiday Alpaca Extravaganza.

- + Meet alpacas and experience the luxury of alpaca
- + Alpaca garments, fashion apparel & accessories will be available for early holiday shopping.
- + Crafters will find fleeces, roving, batts, and yarn in a wide variety of colors.

This FREE event is open to all.

Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, Nov. 30 from 9AM to 5PM

Sunday, Dec. 1 from 10AM to 4PM

Black Forest Community Club is located at 12350 Black Forest Rd. just north of Shoup Rd. For latest information see our web page at <http://secab-extravaganza.weebly.com/> or call 719-495-6693

