

of Administration/Community Risk to Division Chief of Community Risk and include Assistant Emergency Management responsibilities. At present, the Fire Marshal/Administrative Battalion Chief is covering building inspections and interacting with the community about wildfire information and other fire prevention education. The Office Administrator/HR would become Director of Administration overseeing the district accountant.

Secretary Mike Smaldino said he was concerned two years ago when the Training Battalion Chief position was created, which was supposed to handle both fire and EMS. There are too many positions being created on the top side, and the current 20% increase of runs should be supported by a 20% increase in boots on the streets. Consideration should be given to additional staff at the bottom, on the safety side, before he could approve an increase in administrative positions. See [www.ocn.me/v17n8.htm#tlmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v17n8.htm#tlmfpd).

In this extended discussion, Director Terri Hayes, Vice President Roger Lance, Director Tom Tharnish, and Hildebrandt asked many additional clarifying questions about Truty's plans.

Truty answered the board as follows:

- The Master Plan study recommended extra staff to support the shift personnel on the street who are also handling administrative tasks.
- An additional ambulance or engine is going to happen to get more operational staff out there as the organization grows with the community, but we're not quite there yet.
- We are trying to do it all—apparatus, wages, stations, and putting an extra person on shift—and we really haven't given the support staff the ability to focus on narrowly defined job descriptions.
- This is not about more chiefs.

### Wage increases suggested

Truty said that after his last meeting with Lt. Franz Hankins, president of the Local International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) 4319 and their discussion over the potential loss of staff to higher paying departments, Hankins had indicated that he would prefer to see at least a 4% increase in wages to help combat the district's vulnerability and because the district is now receiving higher revenues. Therefore, Truty asked the board to consider a 3.75% wage increase for the proposed 2020 budget rather than the 3% he suggested at the September board meeting.

Truty said the union and the district are using different definitions of "comparable" competitive wages with neighboring districts. Director Terri Hayes said, "It is a bad rabbit hole to go down, constantly comparing TLMFPD with Denver Metro and Colorado Springs—we are a much smaller district and we will always lose people." Lance said, "That's our competition. We have gone from a hemorrhage to a slow leak, but I would prefer to have happy firefighters."

Truty said the district has lost only one person in the last two years, to Boulder Fire Department, which is one of the highest-paying districts in Colorado.

After much deliberation and disagreement over the appropriate percentage for a 2020 wage increase (each 0.25% equates to \$18,000), the board voted 3-2 for a 3.75% wage increase. Hayes and Smaldino voted no because they were in favor of a 3% increase.

Truty also proposed an annual longevity bonus for staff serving beyond 10 years. He said employees currently receive \$8 per month of additional pay once employed for 36 months, which increases per year up to 12 years with a final cap of \$100 per month. The current longevity formula rewards employees from three to 12 years and stops rewarding beyond that, which is not much of a reward for longer commitments, said Truty. The board unanimously agreed that the new longevity proposal should be included in the 2020 budget for an additional cost of \$25,548.

Truty also asked the board to approve compensation for staff serving in acting positions higher than their current pay grade for 12 hours or longer (at the equivalent rate of the position) for the remainder of 2019 and throughout 2020. The board approved 5-0 for an additional \$3,000 per month for 2019 and \$12,000 for 2020 for acting position compensation. The compensation would come out of the current shift overtime allocation that is currently only at 43% of the budget.

### Financial report

Hildebrandt read the financial report and noted the following as of the end of September:

- Ambulance revenues were at 89.7% of the budget and have surprisingly jumped, with a 20% increase in calls.
- Revenue from impact fees year to date were only \$94,290 or 62.86% of the expected \$150,000 anticipated in the 2019 budget.
- Building maintenance expenses were 11.84% higher than last year.

Despite administrative expenses, building expenses, and firefighting equipment being over budget, overall yearly expenses are 7.79 % under budget so far, said Hildebrandt.

The board accepted the financial report 5-0.

### Chief's report

Truty gave the following update:

- The Station 1 remodel is moving ahead, and final layout plans will be available for staff to view at all three stations.
- The process for the annexation of Station 1 into Monument was approved by the Monument Board of Trustees on Oct. 7. The hearing on the annexation will be in November. See Monument BOT article on page 6.
- AMR is in negotiations with the City of Colorado Springs, and it is Truty's intent to make sure nothing is accepted by the Colorado Springs fire chief that TLMFPD does not agree with.

### President refutes misinformation about ballot measure 6A

Hildebrandt discussed a letter to the editor of *The Tribune* published in the Oct. 23 edition, claiming



**Above:** TLMFPD board President John Hildebrandt administers the oath to newly elected Director Tom Kelly at the Oct. 23 board meeting. Chief Chris Truty and Vice President Roger Lance are in the background. Photo by Natalie Barszcz.

that TLMFPD's ballot measure 6A is an attempt to increase taxes without future public approval. He said that the measure was not a tax increase and that he planned to respond to the letter. A full explanation of the Gallagher Amendment and the proposed ballot measure 6A can be found on the district's website at <http://tlmfire.org/issue-6a>.

### New board director selected

At the end of the regular meeting, the board discussed candidate questions and the format of the interview process. Candidates Michael deBettencourt, Heather Jacobson, Tom Kelly, David Pheteplace, and Jon Voyles were asked five identical questions by the board members individually. The board ranked the candidates and the votes were tallied by Deputy Chief Randy Trost and Office Administrator/HR Jennifer Martin.

Woodmoor resident Kelly was selected and will serve through May 2020. Hildebrandt administered the oath for newly appointed director. All of the directors individually thanked the candidates and encouraged them to continue seeking ways to volunteer in the community.

TLMFPD will have five open board director positions in May 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

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Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. However, the next two meetings are scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Nov. 20 and Dec. 4 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Office Administrator/HR Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011. For upcoming agendas, see [www.tlmfire.org/board](http://www.tlmfire.org/board).

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

## September Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

After a record warm September, the pattern changed dramatically in October. Of course, that's what makes living in Colorado so wonderful—the weather is never boring around here. Temperatures were well below normal, with new all-time record lows set, and snowfall was well above normal for the month.

The month started off with normal conditions, with upper 50s to upper 60s each afternoon, except on the 3rd, when low clouds and fog hung in long enough to hold temperatures in the low 50s. Skies cleared that afternoon and, with the cool start and longer night, low temperatures dipped below freezing for most areas for the first time this season. Drizzle and light rain occurred during the morning hours on the 2nd and 3rd as well, making things feel even more fall-like. Also, during the first week of the month, smoke from the Deckers wildfire was a common occurrence, providing for some beautiful sunsets.

A drastic change was headed our way over the next couple of days as a record cold air mass was about to move in. The initial frontal passage occurred just before 7 p.m. on the 9th, with stratus clouds quickly filling in. A few flurries also began just before midnight as the cold air deepened over the area. There were fog, flurries, and a beautiful coating of rime ice on the trees. Snow began to fall harder and accumulate from mid-morning through midafternoon on the 10th, with 1-3 inches for most of us. The bigger story

was the cold. High temperatures were reached just after midnight and held in the low to mid-teens during the day. As skies cleared that evening, the record cold air mass combined with the fresh snow cover and allowed temperatures to plummet overnight. By the morning of the 11th, many areas were in the single digits above and below zero, setting records for cold so early in the season and only a few weeks after the record September warmth.

Quiet and generally mild conditions returned from the 12th through the 18th, with highs ranging from the upper 50s to the low 70s each afternoon and plenty of sunshine. Each morning saw temperatures dip into the low 30s and 20s, providing the nice feel of fall over the region.

Cooler and unsettled conditions then returned to the area, with highs dipping back into the 40s and 50s from the 19th through the afternoon of the 22nd. At the same time, a storm system was dropping out of the Pacific Northwest and through the northern Rockies. The first signs of this storm began to affect the area by the early afternoon of the 23rd as clouds increased and temperatures dropped. Light snow began to develop around 2:30 p.m., with heavier snow filling in that afternoon through evening. The heavy snow continued through the early hours of the 24th and by the time the storm moved out, anywhere from 6-12 inches of new snow had accumulated. This produced some treacherous driving conditions as well

because a layer of ice had developed on most of the roads when the snow started.

The fresh snow and cool air mass held temperatures just below freezing all day on the 24th, then a return to sunshine allowed 50s to return on the 25th. Another even colder air mass was heading our way and would arrive late on the 26th, but ahead of the cold push, warm, southwesterly winds kicked in. This pushed high temperatures back well into the upper 60s and low 70s on the 26th. But that was the last time we were above freezing for the remainder of the month.

The next strong cold front moved through at around 8 p.m. on the 26th, with low clouds and fog filling in. The cold air mass was fairly shallow through the morning of the 27th, allowing areas of freezing drizzle to form and causing some slick surfaces. As the cold air mass continued to fill in, the moisture deepened and light snow began to fall by the late morning and early afternoon of the 27th. Light snow turned to heavier snow by evening and continued into the early hours of the 28th. Temperatures continued to drop during the period as well, with highs only reaching the upper teens to low 20s on the 28th. Along with this cold, 4-8 inches of new snow accumulated through the morning. This system quickly departed by early afternoon, but the break until the next storm was very short.

Another surge of cold air moved in on the morn-