

tion goals. The town hall meeting of the previous week was divided into several small groups who then reported back on their conversations.

Taylor said that he enjoyed attending the town hall meeting and was glad to see such diversity in the participants. He said, however, that the board should have a goal in mind when conducting these meetings.

Phillips said that she was impressed with the diversity of ideas and that people engaged in conversation respectfully.

Upchurch said that she valued the open dialogue and said that personal

interactions are important.

Somers said that the board must speak with a single voice, decide exactly what they want and how to get there. When a single subject, such as the use of Grace Best Education Center, comes up repeatedly, that must be addressed. He would like to see a framework for a strategic plan by March.

Taylor suggested that the district find a way to compare our teachers' salaries to those in districts 12 and 20 and show this to the public in addition to problems with funding maintenance of district facilities.

Clawson said that the board should

discuss its goals at the work session and include plans for community conversations showing the district budget in detail.

Mark Pfoff retired from the board at the Nov. 4 meeting. Newly elected Director Ron Schwarz was in attendance but cannot be officially sworn in until the election is certified in late November.

The Lewis-Palmer D-38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at the district's learning center, 146 Jefferson St., Monument. The next meeting will be on Dec. 16.

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Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and Pinon Pines Metro Districts 1, 2, and 3, Nov. 4 Rate increases proposed; preliminary 2020 budget discussed

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and Pinon Pines Metropolitan Districts (PPMD) 1, 2, and 3 board meetings on November 4, the directors discussed proposed rate increases, the preliminary 2020 budget and changed future meeting times to 4 p.m.

Forest Lakes is a Title 32 service district in El Paso County. FLMD is the half-acre operating district that collects property taxes and is responsible for the public infrastructure for the residents of PPMD 1 and PPMD 2, which are in unincorporated El Paso County, and PPMD 3, the commercial section, which lies mostly within the southwest town limits of Monument.

Board members for FLMD, PPMD 2 and 3 are: President George Lenz, executive vice president of finance of Classic Homes; Secretary James Boulton, vice president/project manager of Classic Homes; Assistant Secretary and Treasurer Doug Stimple, CEO of Classic Homes; and Assistant Secretary Joe Loidolt, president of Classic Homes. One board member vacancy exists in all three of these districts.

PPMD 1 board Directors include FLMD residents Mike Hitchcock and Mike Slavick alongside Lenz, Stimple and Loidolt.

Ann Nichols is the manager for all four districts.

Note: One board director position remains vacant for FLMD, PPMD 2 and PPMD 3. PPMD 1 board Director Mike Slavick was excused.

Rate increases proposed

Nichols proposed the 2020 FLMD budget include rate increases due to a current need for ongoing subsidies from the development fees to pay for water, wastewater services, and common area landscaping and watering. She suggested a 12% increase in water and wastewater rates and increasing the common area landscaping maintenance fee by 20% to \$13 a month. This would be part of a series of increases over the next few years. It still leaves deficits in 2020 but would be narrowing the gaps, she said.

Note: Nichols has consistently said that she would do cost-of-service analyses once the district actually included homes and began operating. See www.ocn.me/v17n1.htm#flmd.

Nichols said in comparison to other neighboring districts "we are cheap" and we need to bear in mind that in 2020, FLMD will experience nine months with no new development fees and that will create a deficit in all areas. (See related EPC PC article on page 22) Also, the surface water treatment plant started operating four months ago, providing all the residents' and districts' water instead of using well water. She wants to analyze what it really costs to operate. Stimple added, "as long as we are not the highest, I don't see how the residents can complain." The FLMD public hearing on rates will be held on Dec. 9.

The proposed rate increases for 2020 can be found at www.forestlakes-metrodistrict.com.

Preliminary 2020 budget discussion

Director James Boulton said that all permits have now been pulled for PPMD 1 and that would need to be updated in the preliminary 2020 budget. The final two lots have now closed in filing 4. Director George Lenz said further amendments will need to be reflected in the final budget proposal scheduled to be presented at the next meeting.

Nichols proposed budgeting \$40,000 for the irrigation of common area landscaping in 2020. Hitchcock said, that water irrigation of the common areas should be re-evaluated to reduce the regularity of watering in established landscaping so water is not wasted.

Financial reports

Nichols presented the August financial report for PPMD 1 and commented that facilities fees pledged to pay the bonds are lagging behind the original budgeted amount.

The PPMD 1 board directors accepted the August financials as presented, 4-0.

Barbara Jean Cusack



Barbara Jean (Wyka) Cusack

Barbara Jean Cusack, a resident of Palmer Lake for more than 30 years, died peacefully at her home, surrounded by loved ones, on November 21. She was born on February 25, 1953 in Homewood, Illinois to Robert and Betty (McMinn) Wyka, who preceded her in death, along with her brother Mark Wyka and sister Karen McCall.

Barbara grew up on the South Side of Chicago. She graduated from Bogan High School in 1971 and married her high school sweetheart, John Cusack, at St. Bede Catholic Church in 1972. In 1977, they fell in love with Palmer Lake and moved to the town with their two young children. Barbara was a beloved school bus driver for District 38 before landing a job at Digital Equipment Corporation, where she worked her way up to becoming a Computer Software Specialist. She remained with the company for 30 years as it transitioned to Compaq, and then Hewlett Packard, and developed many lifelong friendships along the way. During that time, she also earned a four year certificate of

scripture study at Benet Hill Center, traveled to Poland, Israel and Rome, and was active at St. Peter Catholic Church in Monument.

Barbara loved living in Palmer Lake, taking long walks around town, and spending time with her family at home. She was always up for a spontaneous adventure and had an unforgettable laugh. Her favorite pastime was being with her grandson, her "birthday buddy," whom she adored. She brightened and enriched the lives of her family and close friends with her selflessness and unconditional love and support. She was the light of our lives and we'll miss her terribly.

Barbara is survived by John, her husband of 47 years, her son Shane Cusack, daughter Cori (Cusack) Sperry, son-in-law Shane Sperry, grandson Colton, brother Richard Wyka, his wife Denise, and many loving in-laws, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews and a host of long-time friends.

The family would like to thank the wonderful staff at Pikes Peak Hospice for helping care for her during her final days.

Barbara did not want a funeral. An informal celebration of her life will be held at O'Malley's from 2 to 4 p.m. on **Saturday, December 7**. Her interment is scheduled for **Friday, December 20** at 2 p.m. at Cedar Hill Cemetery in Castle Rock.

In lieu of flowers, please honor Barbara's memory by having a beer or glass of wine, striking up a conversation with a stranger, making a new friend, or taking a walk in nature.



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