

Monument Planning Commission, May 8

Planning Commission procedures and planning acronyms available on town website

By Kate Pangelinan

The May 8 Monument Planning Commission meeting was scheduled to focus on the standard language to begin Planning Commission meetings, guidelines for those meetings, and a review of planning acronyms and agency abbreviations.

A draft version of these procedures, as well as

a list of these acronyms, is available on the Town of Monument's website: <https://monumenttownco.documents-on-demand.com>. It is inside the May 8 packet.

MPC meetings are generally held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month. MPC meetings are

live streamed and are supposed to be available for viewing at <http://bit.ly/2uZxjfa>, but the May 8 meeting was not posted online. For more information, call 884-8017 or access <http://www.townofmonument.org/meetings>.

Kate Pangelinan can be reached at katepangelinan@ocn.me.

Monument Board of Trustees, May 20

Water rates discussion begins again

By Allison Robenstein

On May 20, the Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) agreed to discuss a water rates increase that could become an ordinance at the next meeting June 3. The trustees looked forward to a joint workshop with Triview Metropolitan District, renewed the lease for the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Center at its current location in old town hall, and approved a temporary moratorium on acceptance of businesses selling Kratom. They also recognized four town employees including police Corporal Rob Stewart who was recognized for saving a life..

Trustee Greg Coopman was noted absent by Town Clerk Laura Hogan.

Public hearing for water rate increases coming

Public Works director Tom Tharnish discussed increasing water rates for the over 900 Monument water customers on the west side of I-25. Tharnish said water rates had not been increased since March 2016, but even with those increases, current rates still cover only a portion of operations, maintenance, debt, and other costs. See www.ocn.me/v16n4.htm#mbot0307.

The cost of providing water to customers is increasing with added regulations and energy, infrastructure, and operations expenses. Tharnish said the Water Enterprise Fund was created to fund future water operations, provide a reserve fund for unforeseen expenditures, and to maintain revenue to support future debt service. Over the next five years, Public Works will need to make \$4.1 million in improvements.

Currently, Monument Water sells water for as



Above: At the board meeting May 20, Police Chief Jake Shirk recognized Cpl. Rob Stewart for his work in saving a suicidal person's life. On Dec 12, 2018, Stewart was called to a home where a man was threatening his own life. The person convinced Stewart he was not going harm himself, but as the corporal was leaving he saw the individual run into a busy street with a revolver. Stewart was able to disarm the man, who came to the station later and thanked him for saving him from taking his life. From left are Stewart, Shirk, and Town Manager Mike Foreman. Photo by Allison Robenstein.

little as \$6 per 1,000 gallons, but it costs \$10.67 per 1,000 gallons to produce the water. The town uses a tiered rate structure that charges more per 1,000 gallons as customers use more water. Tharnish is asking to increase the cost for one gallon from \$0.006 to \$0.011 in 2019 and increase use rates about 6 percent a year through 2024. He also would like to start billing "per gallon" rather than the current "per 1,000 gallons" to give customers tools to make informed decisions about their water use. He said residents may work to conserve more water if they know exactly how much they're using rather than seeing a percentage of 1,000 gallons on their bill.

Tharnish said 60 percent of residents use a 3/4-inch pipe and will see a 30 percent drop in their water "base rate," which is the minimum bill each month. Mayor Don Wilson was concerned the new rates were planned to take effect Aug. 1 during a time of high water use. The board directed Tharnish to bring an ordinance to the next meeting for their review and to hear public comments. If it passes, the ordinance won't take effect until sometime after the summer.

BOT and Triview hold workshop

The BOT and the Triview Metropolitan District board planned to hold a collaborative workshop on Wednesday, May 22 at the Club at Flying Horse. The meeting's agenda included topics relevant to both governmental agencies and that cover a majority of the town of Monument, including:

- North Monument Creek Interceptor and the associated northern El Paso county water delivery pipeline.
- Strategies to attract commercial business to the two areas.
- The ongoing Jackson Creek Parkway widening project.
- Discussion of a traffic master plan.
- Higby Road annexation.

Note: Triview is a Colorado Title 32 special district, completely within Monument's town boundaries and mostly on the east side of I-25. Triview provides roads, parks, and drainage maintenance, and water and sanitation utility services, to the residents and businesses in the district roughly bordered by Old Denver Road, Higby Road, and Baptist Road. Triview's water system is wholly independent of Monument's Public Works water system located on the west side of I-25.

The Town of Monument (organized under Colorado Revised Statutes Title 30) provides land use planning, police, and general governance for property owners in the whole town, which includes Triview.

Chamber of Commerce extends lease of old town hall

The BOT unanimously approved a lease renewal for

the chamber and visitor's center to remain in the old town hall. The chamber acts as a localized business advocacy association helping existing businesses as well as working to bring new business to the town.

Background: In January 2015 the chamber and the town entered into a five-year lease agreement to house the chamber at its current location of 166 Second St. In the original lease, the rent charged is \$1 annually, with the chamber being responsible for all maintenance, upkeep of the property, and any renovations.

Town Manager Mike Foreman told the board his previous experience with chambers of commerce was symbiotic with the town and is a better option financially than housing a town employee at the visitor's center. Foreman said Community Specialist Madeline VanDenHoek had been working on improving and increasing wayfinding signs to attract visitors.

After some discussion, the resolution passed with all agreeing utilities would continue to be paid by the town.

180-day moratorium on Kratom sales in town

Monument Police Chief Jake Shirk was asked to approve a business selling Kratom. Shirk said he wasn't sure what Kratom does and wanted to research the drug before approving the business. He asked for a 90-day moratorium on approving any businesses selling the product. Mayor Pro tem Kelly Elliott suggested he take 180 days to develop a plan.

Resident Josh Miller spoke in favor of the ordinance, saying that after drinking Kratom tea for seven years, he has been able to beat an opioid addiction.

The board unanimously approved the temporary moratorium.

Buxton will create economic development strategy

VanDenHoek asked the board to approve a resolution awarding a marketing analysis project to the Buxton company. The town will partner with Triview Metropolitan District to create a joint economic development plan.

Foreman said in addition to the marketing strategy and associated data analytics, Buxton is like a matchmaker with access to over 4,000 retailers. Its approach will be fourfold:

- Developing a profile of residents and visitors.
- Understanding current retail and restaurant economic conditions.
- Recruiting new retailers and restaurants.
- Retaining existing shops and restaurants.

Trustee Laurie Clark asked what would happen if Triview doesn't approve its portion of the \$50,000 contract. Marco Fiorito, vice president of Triview, attended the BOT meeting and said there was very little chance of this not passing at Triview's monthly meeting on May 21. See related Triview article on page 17.

Fiorito said Buxton will work to bring an eclectic mix of local, regional, and national businesses to the town.

The board passed the resolution for a \$15,000 one-year contract with annual renewal to be determined at the end of 2019.

The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next meeting is scheduled for June 3. Call 884-8014 or see www.townofmonument.org for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minuteson-demand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

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Broker Associate
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