

nance and accounting practices.

Downs thanked district accountant Becky Weese, Jenny Bilbrey her bookkeeper, and Jennifer Martin for the outstanding financial accountability systems put in place.

Truty thanked Carlson for teaching TLMFPD something new every year.

The 2018 audit was accepted 6-0 as presented.

Chief's report

Truty announced the following updates:

- The Station 1 remodel is still in the design process and making tiered wish lists, the lowest of which is what is currently in the approved budget.
- The process of annexation into the Town of Monument is still going forward.
- The labor agreement has been tentatively approved by TLMFPD and the labor representation. If ratified by the labor union, it will be presented to the board for approval for a one-year agreement.
- The El Paso County 911 Authority is installing station alerting systems county-wide to improve communications within all fire stations. The systems automatically turn on color-coded lights and turn electric devices off throughout a station when a call comes in to alert firefighters, allowing them to turn off radios and only be notified of relevant calls.
- The Larkspur Fire Department is having difficulty with access points to accidents on the I-25 Gap project. TLMFPD has a two-mile jurisdiction past County Line Road and has not experienced any difficulties, but Phase 3 is coming,

and access problems could increase.

- The Pikes Peak Regional Communications Network in conjunction with Douglas County has installed repeaters on its towers. From Aug. 5, emergency communications in northwestern El Paso County will be greatly improved.

Station and fleet update

Deputy Chief Randy Trost said the leach field at Station 2 is now installed and fully operational. He thanked Bob and Carol Simpson for allowing the installation of a new leach field on their property.

Note: A leach field, also called a septic drain field or leach drain, is used with a septic system for the disposal of subsurface wastewater contaminants. It usually consists of an arrangement of trenches and perforated piping, with a layer of porous material (often gravel) to absorb the wastewater from the septic tank, and a covering of soil.

The second new engine is approaching buildout and the final design inspection team will visit Pierce Manufacturing Inc. in Appleton, Wis., from Aug. 18 to 21. The engine is expected to be in service mid-September.

Training update

Battalion Chief of Training Jonathan Bradley said the North Group active shooter drill took place at Palmer Lake Elementary School in mid-July with participation from TLMFPD, Donald Wescott, Black Forest, Palmer Lake and Larkspur Fire Departments, Monument Police Department, AMR, Penrose St. Francis, EMS institute and District 38. Monument and Colorado Springs Fire Department Explorers (14-20-year-old men and women) participated as live casualties

for a 30-hour period in the simulated event. The point of the drill was to neutralize the threat and to test the skills learned last year with emphasis now on creating joint operating procedures in realistic scenarios.

Wildland fire updates

Truty said the district is now ready to be deployed to wildland fires if necessary. The Rocky Mountain Region risk is low this year, but 40 large wildland fires are burning in the United States at this time. Typically, an average of 100 fires are burning throughout fire season. A large wildland fire is defined as over 100 acres of timber or 300 acres of timber and grass.

Administrative Battalion Chief/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner said a new Development Review Team has started meeting monthly at the Town of Monument to create a synergistic review process so that fire, utilities, etc. can see the big picture in proposed developments.

Bumgarner said training on the new chipper has begun for the TLMFPD staff. Chipping days are scheduled with homeowners associations and wild-fire risk mitigation inspections, and new subdivision reviews are ongoing.

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Aug. 28 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.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz.ocn.me.

Monument Academy School Board, July 18

Board hears stakeholder feedback on new school

By Jackie Burhans

The Monument Academy (MA) School Board met on July 18 to hear feedback from stakeholders on the new school, elect officers, and volunteer for committee assignments. Principal Elizabeth Davis was absent.

Stakeholder feedback

During public comments, several people provided feedback on plans for MA's new school.

Mike Herbert, a seventh-grade teacher at MA, expressed concern about the number of boys' toilets and the combined teacher workroom/lunchroom. He said it would be difficult for teachers to concentrate or have private phone conversations with parents. He asked that the board create a design advisory group

made up of teachers, staff, and students to address these concerns noting that, though he had brought this up to administration twice in the past five months, no action had been taken.

James Keating, an MA parent, asked, given the email that said the board had declined to renew Dr. Don Griffin's contract as executive director, why the board was confident Griffin would provide the services sought in his new contract and act with integrity and transparency during the financing and construction of MA's new school. He also asked for the document that provided the board's authority to sign and obligate MA to enter into a contract for services.

Cristin Patterson, who is the strings teacher at MA and whose husband is the band teacher, said she and the performance art team are concerned the new expansion will not support what is currently offered at MA nor support the board's strategic plan. She said the new gym that is the hub of the new school in Phase 1 is smaller than the existing gym at MA and has no space for spectators. She noted that band and orchestra share a single space and are divided from the gym by a folding panel partition. She felt that it left one unusable wall, would be noisy, and did not provide sufficient security for valuable equipment. She noted that there is no raised stage in the gym and expressed concern that four board members had not yet seen the plans. She asked the board if this is what they wanted for their own kids and for the future of MA.

In additional comments, grandparent Carolyn Beddingfield expressed concerns about MA's use of the TAGG system to hire substitutes, noting that Griffin had invested \$15,000 in the company and expressing concern about the possible conflict of interest. She also noted his new contract would pay him \$90,000 per year, which she noted was equivalent to three new teachers' salaries. Community member Julie Keim also expressed concern that MA's new bond comes from Wisconsin, given that Colorado is one of the few states that provides the school an improved bond rating. She asked that board members be transparent and ask questions, because they could bankrupt both schools by making the wrong choice.

Board officers and committee assignments
The MA board unanimously approved the following board officers for 2019-20:

- President Mark McWilliams
- Vice President Mark Molsen
- Secretary Megghan St. Aubyn
- Treasurer Melanie Strop

Board members volunteered for the following committee assignments:

- Curriculum, Dwayne Cooke
- School Advisory Academic Committee, Chris Dole

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