

tract's motivations in pursuing annexation. There are hopes to do some work on the property, for example, and it was deemed preferable to go through the town as opposed to the county.

If any additional building projects are proposed for Fire Station 1 in the future, a Planned Development Site Plan would need to be provided and an impact fee will be collected at that time.

During public comments, two people expressed concern about their currently unincorporated properties becoming surrounded by municipalities.

The question was raised about whether this would force an unincorporated property into annexation. Planning staff established that to be considered an "enclave," a property would have to be surrounded on all sides by the same municipality, not by two separate ones, and that even should a property become an enclave, the owners still may not head down the road to annexation if they don't request it and the town does not pursue it.

A motion to approve the fire station's annexation passed unanimously,

7-0.

There will be several changes in the Planning Commission lineup starting out during January 2020, as well as a possible time change for meetings. It was proposed that MPC meetings be held at 5:30 or 6 instead of the current 6:30, and returning commissioners seemed amenable to the change. The next meeting, however, will be held on Jan. 8 at 6:30, keeping with the previously established time.

Planning Commission Chair Michelle Glover was thanked for her time

on the commission, as this was her last meeting, and she said it was an honor to serve with her fellow commissioners.

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MPC meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of the month at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. Information: 884-8017 or <http://www.townofmonument.org/meetings/>.

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Monument Board of Trustees, Dec. 16

# Treasurer payout, 2020 budget approved

By Allison Robenstein

The Monument Board of Trustees approved the 2020 budget as presented by Finance Director Rosa Ooms during the Dec. 16 meeting. New members were added to the Planning Commission, and a controversial campaign finance ordinance was passed. A separation agreement with the treasurer was completed. Town Manager Mike Foreman had his annual review during a brief executive session.

Trustee Laurie Clark was noted absent.

## 2020 budget approved

Ooms presented a 2020 budget for approval that has gone through many iterations throughout the four budget workshops held by the town—Sept. 9, Oct. 7, Nov. 18, and Dec. 9. Throughout all the meetings, Town Manager Mike Foreman has said town staff used a 6% increase in revenues for forecasting, although revenues have been reaching

up to 14% in monthly increases.

The biggest change to the budget this year is the addition of the Capital Projects Fund, which receives revenues from the Use Tax, Highway User Tax, and the Road/Bridge Tax. A transfer of \$682,000 from the General Fund was used as the initial deposit for the fund. Previously, revenue collected from these taxes were held within the general fund, but the previous finance director, Bill Wengert, said statutorily those revenues are supposed to be kept in a separate fund. This new fund forecasts out to 2025 for capital projects of an ongoing nature, such as pipe repairs. A total of \$670,000 in projects was budgeted for 2020 including paving, curb and gutter work, and street maintenance.

The Water Enterprise Fund is composed of revenue from town water use and tap fees and includes \$1.748 million in budgeted projects that include radium removal, pipe replacement,

and critical valve replacement. Ooms said several vehicle requests were removed from the budget in order to focus on infrastructure updates as the board has stressed its support of infrastructure improvements. Trustee Jeffrey Bornstein asked why these projects were not being wholly completed in 2020, but rather being extended over five years. Public Works Director Tom Tharnish explained these projects are linear and dependent upon a staged approach. Ooms pointed out pipe replacement and critical valve replacement are expected to be continuous and have been planned for out to 2025. "The board supports you 200%," said Bornstein.

The general fund includes only one new employee request, that of town attorney. Currently, Joseph Rivera acts as town attorney in an external function. The new request is for a full-time town employee. Bornstein asked if this employee will act as the court attorney, too. Since the board's April 15 meeting, the Ausmus law firm has acted as the town's part-time municipal court prosecuting attorney. The firm charges the town \$600 per monthly court session. No decision was made either way.

Trustee Greg Coopman was upset there were not more new employees in the budget. Specifically, he said there should be more police officers added. During earlier budget workshops, additional new employees were budgeted, including three new police officers, but these were removed at some point.

The 2A Water Fund was established for the acquisition of water rights as well as water storage and delivery. In 2020, the town budgeted \$4.7 million in 2A funds for capital projects. The much-needed second water storage tank and pipeline were approved for \$3.5 million although no location was approved for placement.

The Community Development Fund was changed to include community grants that were previously included in the general fund. A total of \$134,000 was transferred from the general fund to community development. These grants are requested by local businesses to make physical improvements to their buildings or to fund advertising. Bornstein asked if the grant program should be put on hold for 2020 since the budget is tight. "I don't know what the return on investment is" for this project, he said. Mayor Don Wilson said, "I'm not interested in discussing these grants." Foreman said the five-year program has benefited the downtown economy, so Bornstein asked to see some measurable criteria in the future.

Although Clark was not present during tonight's public budget hearing, she has asked about Chamber of Commerce funding during budget workshops. Clark held a meeting on a weekend at the Chamber building and stated there was no heat and believed the building needs a new HVAC system.



Above: Carly Coates was honored as the Town of Monument Employee of the Month for November. She was previously with the Glendale Police Department as the sheriff's secretary. Here, she has been records technician, court clerk and property evidence technician since 2018. Coates was recently promoted to records manager, supervising all three positions. The acting police chief said she is hard working and much appreciated at the office. The town manager said she stepped up at one point, doing all three of the positions she supervises now. From left are Acting Police Chief Lee Birk, Coates, and Town Manager Mike Foreman. Photo by Allison Robenstein.

Tharnish said the system was replaced last year as part of the town's lease obligations. President and CEO of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce Terri Hayes said, "We've had zero problems with that. It is on a timer, and perhaps it had been turned off for the weekend."

Clark continued the discussion, saying the heat issue is a "serious health hazard that we should address." Both Foreman and Hayes said the issue had already been resolved.

Foreman said the town's relationship with the chamber is important because it operates the visitors center and that shows a lot of value and expenses for the town. Because of the visitors center, the town doesn't need to pay an additional employee to provide the information to the public. "Terri is proactive, and we have a very good relationship with her," he said.

In the end, the 2020 budget was approved 5-1 with Coopman voting against, saying, "I believe it sacrifices public safety."

## Members added to Planning Commission

Four members of the Planning Commission either resigned or are not eligible for another term, so Planning Director Larry Manning asked for new members to be appointed. Chairwoman Michelle Glover and Commissioners Jeremy Lushnat and Ken Kimple do not want to be reappointed. John Dick is term limited.

The remaining members—Chris Wilhelmi, Daniel Ours, and Melanie Strop—each have one year remaining

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**Full Caboose (28" x 47") \$2,000**

**Full Box Car (28" x 38") \$1,800**

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To purchase your train car or for more information, go to [www.awakepalmerlake.org](http://www.awakepalmerlake.org) or [www.forgeyourbliss.com/palmer-lake-train-bridge-project](http://www.forgeyourbliss.com/palmer-lake-train-bridge-project)