

gather further information about the area and the district in the nationwide search for a replacement fire chief. See www.ocn.me/v20n9.htm#tlmfpd.

Hildebrandt said the following:

- On Sep. 23, Prothman posted the fire chief opening for TLMFPD on its website and on several other firefighter industry notice boards, and it will remain open to applicants until Oct. 25. See www.tlmfire.org/Empl-Hiring.
- Risen expects to receive at least 30 applications before he begins narrowing the field, and the names will be kept confidential until the final candidates are selected.
- A Fire Chief Search Committee work session to select candidates for interview with Risen is scheduled for Nov. 16-20.

Truty said state law mandates that the Fire Chief Search Committee meetings will be held in public session, and details will be posted on the district website in advance of the meetings. The public will be given 14 days to investigate the final candidates before the selection process can continue, and after the announcement the committee can no longer enter into executive session. Final interviews are expected to take place the first week in December.

Job description change

Hildebrandt said the Fire Chief Search Committee made a change to the fire chief's job description, which had required a Forest Service "Red Card" S130/190 certification requirement. That has been replaced with the credential of "Must hold and maintain a credential or equivalent experience to perform command or support functions in All-Hazards or Wildfire incidents."

Bradley said the "Red Card" certification is a national certification that also requires an arduous pack test consisting of walking 3 miles in 45 minutes or less, carrying a 45 pound pack.

Requiring a commander support function certification instead allows for a broader selection of candidates and would be in line with the local job requirement, said Bradley. The TLMFPD board agreed the "Red Card" requirement would likely significantly narrow the candidate field during the search.

Truty said he has the final approval for changing job descriptions, but it would be wise to update the qualification requirement.

The board unanimously approved the modification to the fire chief's job description.

Amendment B

Truty thanked the community once again for passing the 2019 de-Gallagherization ballot initiative for TLMFPD, but should Amendment B on the upcoming Nov. 3 ballot not pass, funding will be significantly affected from 2021 onward for small fire protection districts.

Truty said the repeal of the Gallagher Amendment—Amendment B—is intended to freeze the current Residential Assessment Rate (RAR) at 7.15% and then require voter approval should any adjustment be

needed in the future. If Amendment B does not pass, the RAR is expected to drop to 5.8% in 2021, creating almost a 20% drop in funding for Special District Associations (SDA's).

Background: The Gallagher Amendment dictates that Colorado's total property tax revenue must maintain a 45% residential and 55% commercial balance. Because the commercial assessment rate is fixed at 29% the RAR is lowered to maintain the 45/55 balance as property values increase.

Hildebrandt said, "If Amendment B is defeated, the district is going to have to ask for an increase in the mill levy, and the districts that rely almost solely on residential taxes will have it worse; this will be devastating for SDA's."

Deputy Chief Randy Trost said, "The Gallagher question is very confusing for the average person." See Gallagher Amendment & FPD Video The Gallagher Amendment 2.0: A Closer Look at www.cofirechiefs.org.

First look at the proposed 2021 budget

Truty presented the board with the first draft of the 2021 budget and said the following:

- About 98% of the district's revenue comes from property taxes, EMS billing, and the Specific Ownership Tax.
- The projected total revenue for the 2021 budget is \$11.41 million, and anticipated expenses will be \$425,000 higher than the expected revenue. The additional funding will be drawn from reserves.
- The mill levy is recommended to remain at 18.4 mills for 2021.
- A 2% wage increase is proposed.

Truty also proposed a new Reserve-Deployment Fund to deposit reimbursements generated from wildland fire deployments after expenses and wages have been deposited into the General Fund. The residual funding would be used to purchase a brush truck in about five years, and less funding would be required in the Fleet Replacement Fund.

The district also has six funds—each with a separate bank account and some with specific restrictions and dedicated for specific uses. Truty created those categories in 2014. See www.ocn.me/v14n9.htm#tlmfpd-0827.

Amended 2020 budget

Truty said he is requesting a few unforeseen amendments to the 2020 budget as follows:

- The purchase of 15 acres of land adjacent to Station 1 for a total of \$390,000.
- A down payment of \$250,000 for the office suites 102/104.
- The fire chief search for \$35,000.

Only significant changes require a line adjustment to the 2020 budget. In October, the district will hold the public hearing of the amended 2020 budget and a second review of the proposed 2021 budget, said Truty.

Chief's report

Truty said the following:

- EMS/Paramedic Stephanie Soll is the new EMS assistant coordinator.
- Hildebrandt signed the Station 1 annexation into the Town of Monument on Sept. 23.
- The Station 1 remodel has stalled due to the cost estimate being almost double the budgeted amount. Division Chief of Logistics Dean Wahl has been meeting with the architects and the contractor to reduce the costs.
- The district administrative offices moved from Suite 103 to Suites 102/104 at 16055 Old Forest Point, Monument on Sept. 14.

Truty said TLMFPD will not accept controlled drugs for disposal even though a recently passed state law states residents can deposit controlled drugs at their local fire departments. The Drug Enforcement Administration states the recently passed law is a violation of federal law.

Monument Police Department has a secure green drop-off box that can be used by residents who want to safely dispose of prescription or over-the-counter medications. For information, visit Takemedsback.org and visit www.townofmonument.org/policedepartment.

District office purchase

The board met in regular session via Zoom with district attorney Maureen Juran of Widner Juran LLP on Sept. 3 to approve the closing documents related to the purchase of Suite 102/104, 16055 Old Forest Point, Monument, and to authorize the district to enter into a lease purchase transaction with NBH Bank as lessor and the district as lessee.

The board authorized the district to enter into a lease purchase agreement with NBH Bank for the acquisition of office space for use by the district, 6-0. See www.ocn.me/v20n9.htm#tlmfpd.

Vice President Roger Lance was absent at the Sept. 3 meeting.

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next regular meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 28 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information on upcoming agendas, the Fire Chief Search Committee meetings, and Zoom meeting participation instructions, contact Director of Administration Jennifer Martin at 719-484-9011 or visit www.tlmfire.org/board.

Correction

In the September issue of OCN, the TLMFPD article should have read that Battalion Chief Mike Keough deployed to the Williams Fort Fire for two weeks as a division supervisor trainee. OCN regrets the error.

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El Paso Board of County Commissioners, Sept. 8, 15, and 22

Decisions made relating to two ongoing developments

By Helen Walklett

In September, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) authorized pre-development site grading at Rollin Ridge Estates subdivision and approved two partial bond releases relating to the Flying Horse North development.

Rollin Ridge pre-site grading approved

At its Sept. 22 meeting, the BOCC unanimously approved a request by TC&C LLC to authorize pre-development site grading at the 57-acre Rollin Ridge Filing No.1 final plat in advance of the final plat approval. The property is located at the southwest corner of the Highway 83 and Hodgen Road intersection.

Normally, such grading approval is requested at the same time as preliminary plan approval, but this was not the case in this instance. The BOCC approved the

preliminary plan for the development in June 2019. See <https://www.ocn.me/v19n8.htm#epbocc>

Flying Horse North subdivision improvements

At its Sept. 8 meeting, the BOCC approved the partial release of bond funds relating to improvements at the Flying Horse North Filing 1 subdivision following the completion and satisfactory inspection of 70% of the required works. The approval released \$3.15 million of the total \$4.49 million bond amount. The commissioners also approved the partial release of bond funds totaling \$404,122 following the completion and satisfactory inspection of 70% of the required improvements at the development's golf course. The total bond amount relating to improvements at the golf course is \$608,093.

Black Forest Brewing Company license modified

The commissioners approved the temporary modification of the outdoor area covered by the Black Forest Brewing Company's brew pub license at their Sept. 15 meeting. The modification allows the Black Forest Road business to provide additional outdoor seating in line with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's recommendation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Other decisions

On Sept. 8, the commissioners approved an ambulance permit for the Tri-Lakes Fire Protection District. The one-year permit runs until Aug. 31, 2021.

Helen Walklett can be reached at helenwalklett@ocn.me.

El Paso County Planning Commission, Sept. 17

Special use approved for additional living quarters

By Helen Walklett

At its Sept. 17 meeting, the El Paso County Planning Commission heard a special use request for a detached accessory living quarters at a 29-acre Black Forest property on the west side of Herring Road, a quarter of a mile north of Shoup Road.

The request, by property owner Craig McDermott, was for a 1,773-square-foot accessory living space where

1,500 square feet is the maximum size allowed without approval from the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Nina Ruiz, planning manager, Planning and Community Development, explained that, before 2019 revisions to the land development code, such a request would have been subject to administrative approval. However, the changes to the code now meant that these applications had to go through the public hearing

process. She told the commissioners that neighboring property owners had been notified and, as no opposition to the application had been raised, she suggested that an abbreviated hearing be held.

The accessory living quarters will be part of a proposed 4,983-square-foot building. On lots of 2.5 acres or more, an accessory structure can be up to twice the size of the main building. The main house in this case is 2,077