

4-1, with Wilhelmi voting against.

Other public comments

A citizen expressed concern about water availability, stating that nearby lakes are being destroyed and the water cycle is being affected by human involvement. The hope is that Monument doesn't run out of water. It was also

noted by a different citizen that finding information about water districts can be difficult for new residents; the resident in question was encouraged to look up the metro district serving their area's website. Once somebody knows their metro district, they'll be able to contact a representative. See www.ocn.me/maps.htm for maps of metropoli-

tan districts and water districts.

Due to Veterans Day, the next MPC meeting is scheduled for Nov. 12 instead of Nov. 11. MPC meetings will be held online over the next few months due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A limited number of participants are allowed inside the meeting room due to

COVID-19 restrictions, though other attendees can view the proceedings from the hallway. Information: 719-884-8017 or <http://www.townofmonument.org/meetings/>.

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

Monument Board of Trustees, Oct. 19

Board continues work on 2021 budget

By Allison Robenstein

At the Oct. 19 Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting, the board agreed to maintain a reserve of unrestricted funds rather than fund all supplemental budget requests. Board members also heard an update on the I-25 Gap project and witnessed two new police officers being sworn in.

Board agrees to reserve portion of 2021 budget funds

The board has held three budget workshops this year, discussing both necessary projects and those requested per department as supplements to their budget.

Treasurer Rosa Ooms said this approach was designed to provide a target number for each department not to exceed representing their historical costs less a 2% decrease in the 2020 allowance.

Anything over that amount was sent separately as a supplemental request. There is a total of \$2.35 million in supplemental requests.

Ooms said revenue has been higher than expected, but Town Manager Mike Foreman asked the board to use the October estimate of \$650,000 for unrestricted reserves.

Trustee Ron Stephens said, "With regard to the reserves, last year we made a decision to have a lower reserve due to desperate needs, I'd like to see us begin to build up our reserves."

Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott has been concerned that before board members can decide how much to

keep back in reserves, they need to know the criticality of the staff's needs. She said the board must spend money on what's reasonable, saving the most money possible. "I don't want to randomly pick a percent," she said. Elliott repeatedly asked for the staff's priority list before deciding on a percentage split.

Ooms and Foreman offered options for splitting the unrestricted \$650,000 in reserve. Trustee Jim Romanello and Mayor Don Wilson were in favor of a 40% reserve and 60% spent on supplemental items. Trustee Laurie Clark suggested a 50/50 split.

Trustee Ron Stephens suggested picking the reserved dollar amount first and then select supplemental projects with the leftover money. He said the supplemental budget should include at least two of the four police officers the department is requesting and one of the vehicles to be shared between the two. He also suggested a \$10,000 request for supplemental police insurance be included in the supplementals as well, bringing the total to be spent to \$230,000. Chief Sean Hemingway said SB-217 has put officers in a position of higher liability with the new bill, and they could be charged up to \$25,000 civilly without the insurance.

Wilson said this directs too much money to the Police Department, especially if the ballot question is approved asking for a .5% tax increase to be used solely for police budget needs. See <https://ocn.me/v20n9.htm#mbot>.

"The safety of our people is one of the foremost issues," said Stephens.

Stephens said some of the other higher priorities are not "big-ticket items" and provide efficiencies, including:

- Clerk's Office request for records management consulting, \$3,600.
- Finance Department's request for time-keeping software, \$2,500.

The board decided on a 40%/60% split of reserves. This means there will be \$450,000 to fund supplemental requests.

Gap project update

Paul Nieman, Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) I-25 south Gap project manager, gave the board a presentation on the progress of the Gap project. The project won't be completed until 2022.

So far, crews have installed almost 9,600 feet of fiber-optic cable and 350,000 of the 850,000 tons of asphalt that will be paved on the full 18-mile project.

The five-mile northern section from just south of Castle Rock to Sky View Lane will be done next month. No express lanes will be tolled until the entire 18-mile project is complete.

The middle section of the project, from Sky View Lane to Greenland Road, includes three bridges and one wildlife crossing.

The seven-mile stretch between Greenland Road and Monument Hill will have a truck acceleration lane in addition to the two driving lanes and

one express lane. No tolling will occur in El Paso County, just through the Douglas County section starting at County Line Road up to Plum Creek Parkway.

A noise study was conducted for the section of roadway from exit 161 north up Monument Hill. Only sites 500 feet from the roadway were analyzed for noise higher than 66 decibels. Any residences farther than this distance were not measured, although some locations were noted to have higher than normal decibel counts. Noise walls might be constructed for certain locations along the highway.

Wilson asked if Nieman can tell the difference between accidents with construction versus pre-construction. CDOT only has data for 2018 and before that showed 1,500 accidents recorded. Nieman said there has been a total of 3,000 incidents, but those could include requests for the courtesy patrol tow trucks.

Oaths of office

Chief Sean Hemingway and Commander Jonathon Hudson, as well as the full board, welcomed officers Keith Fisher and James Wader. Fisher comes from Parker County Sheriff's Office in Texas. He served in the Army as a military police officer and was deployed for three tours in Iraq. Wader previously worked at the City of Golden Police Department. He served in the Air Force for 10 years, serving as a security police officer and canine handler and deployed for five tours of duty.

Winter is Coming! ... Are you Ready?



Tanglewood Trailers

626 Highway 105

719-960-0600

www.tanglewoodtrailers.com

tanglewoodtrailers@gmail.com

