

## COUNTY PC (Cont. from 18)

alignment of Roller Coaster Road.

The applicant requested a deviation that drive-way access for the second lot be allowed onto Baptist Road, an arterial road, instead of Roller Coaster Road. Normally access is not allowed onto an arterial roadway, but the request was granted because of safety concerns with access via Roller Coaster Road due to a large curve near the property that would cause a dangerous blind spot.

The application was heard as a consent item, meaning there was no discussion. The commissioners voted unanimously to recommend it for approval. It was scheduled to be heard at the BOCC meeting on April 28.

### Upcoming appeal to the Board of Adjustment

On May 13, the Board of Adjustment will hear an appeal of a decision made by Craig Dossey, executive director of Planning and Community Development,

to deny a request for approval of administrative relief for a proposed subdivision that would consist of three lots less than 5 acres on a property zoned RR-5 (rural residential) where the minimum lot size is 5 acres. Dossey denied the application on the grounds that it did not meet the review criteria for administrative relief as set out in the county's land development code.

The 14.89-acre property, located on the east side of Goshawk Road just north of Hodgen Road, is owned by Daniel Andres. The minimum lot size would be 4.95 acres. If the appeal is approved, Andres plans to submit a minor subdivision application, to be known as Circle A Subdivision Filing No.1. The intention is that his children will build homes for their families on the two additional lots. Andres' attorneys have stated that the property had always been assessed as a 15-acre parcel and that it was only when their client began the subdivision process that modern surveying techniques discovered the property to be slightly smaller.

The appeal will be heard in the BOCC hearing room at 200 S. Cascade Ave. at 9 a.m. on May 13. The

hearing will be streamed live at <https://www.elpaso-co.com/news-information-channel> and on the county's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ElPasoCountyCO/>. Anyone wishing to participate is being encouraged to do so remotely in the same way as participation is encouraged for Planning Commission meetings (see above).

### Master plan update

Work on the new county master plan continues. The April 1 Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC) meeting was held remotely via Vimeo. Dossey said he hoped that work on the new plan would be completed by the end of the year as planned, despite the COVID-19 outbreak. Information about the plan, including the recording of the April 1 MPSC meeting, can be found on the county's website at <https://elpaso-hlplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>. Progress reports are normally given at the end of Planning Commission meetings.

Helen Walklett can be reached at [helenwalklett@ocn.me](mailto:helenwalklett@ocn.me).

## April Weather Wrap

By Bill Kappel

April is often one of the more erratic months of the year as we transition from winter to spring. Of course, spring for us usually isn't much of a "season"; instead we usually jump back and forth between winter and summer. This year was no different, with record lows during the middle of the month and near 80° highs by the end of the month. For the month overall, both temperatures and precipitation were below normal.

The first shot of cold air moved into the region late on April 1st, with a strong cold front ushering in colder air and snow at times. Stratus clouds and fog greeted us on the morning of the 2nd, with a few flurries. Steadier snow developed later that day, with some heavy snow at times during the evening. Light snow continued through the next morning, with 4-6 inches accumulating throughout the region. Temperatures were well below normal both days, with highs in the 30s on the 2nd and upper 20s on the 3rd.

After a chilly start on the 4th, mild conditions returned for the next few days, with highs jumping back into the 50s and 60s from the 5th through the 11th. But this was ahead of the next shot of cold air, and this time it was record cold. The initial wind shift ahead of this cold air came through during the mid-evening hours of the 11th, with the stronger cold front a few hours later. Temperatures dropped over 40 degrees from the afternoon of the 11th to the morning of the 12th, going from 65°F on the 11th to 14°F at 7 a.m. on the 12th.

Of course, associated with the cold air, snow developed quickly, with light snow on the 12th turning

to heavier snow on the 13th. This initial shot of cold air produced 6-10 inches around the region and, as skies cleared during the morning of the 14th, temperatures plummeted. Low temperatures fell to zero and slightly below that morning, setting daily record lows. The cold air also stuck around during each day, with record low high temperatures occurring on the 13th. Temperatures warmed slightly on the 14th and 15th, ahead of another reinforcing shot of cold air. This next cold front moved through during the mid-evening hours of the 15th.

Low clouds and fog again developed that evening and into the next morning, with brief heavy snow and blowing snow accumulating that afternoon. Temperatures were again well below normal, with highs only reaching the upper 20s the afternoon of the 16th.

After this round of cold and snow moved out, more spring-like conditions took hold. This meant generally quiet and cool mornings, then developing clouds by late morning and early afternoon. The stronger sun and more intense heating of the atmosphere meant those clouds continued to develop and often turned into to brief rain or snow showers. There were even a few rumbles of thunder on a couple of the days. None of the showers produced much measurable precipitation, but it was definitely a sign of the season changing. This pattern of quiet mornings and active afternoons continued from the 17th through the 25th.

This pattern was finally broken when warmer and generally drier air began to move in from the west to end the month. This produced our warmest tempera-

tures of the month as well, with our first 70s of the season occurring during the final days of the month. This was the first time we reached above the 70°F mark since Oct. 17th of 2019.

### A look ahead

May often brings a wide variety of weather conditions in the region, from warm, sunny days to severe thunderstorms and hail, and even some snowfall. Just last year we had a major snowstorm toward the end of the month, with nearly 2 feet of snow accumulating. But other times very little snow falls during the month and temperatures can reach well into the 80s.

### April 2020 Weather Statistics

Average High	55.9° (-0.6°)
Average Low	26.3° (-1.3°)
Highest Temperature	79° on the 29th
Lowest Temperature	0° on the 14th
Monthly Precipitation	0.83"
	(-2.13", 70% below normal)
Monthly Snowfall	16.9"
	(-9.8", 37% below normal)
Season to Date Snow	135.7"
	(+18.1", 15% above normal)
	(the snow season is from July 1 to June 30)
Season to Date Precip.	8.45"
	(+2.11", 33% above normal)
	(the precip season is from July 1 to June 30)
Heating Degree Days	718 (+29)
Cooling Degree Days	0

Bill Kappel is a meteorologist and Tri-Lakes resident. He can be reached at [billkappel@ocn.me](mailto:billkappel@ocn.me).

## Letters to Our Community

Guidelines for letters are on page 31.

**Disclaimer:** The information and opinions expressed in Letters to Our Community are the responsibility of the letter writers and should not be interpreted as the views of OCN even if the letter writer is an OCN volunteer.

unteer.

### Inspired by Winston Churchill

The story about Winston Churchill in last month's Art Matters column ([www.ocn.me/v20n4.htm#art](http://www.ocn.me/v20n4.htm#art)) was inspiring. While I have always enjoyed Churchill's

quotes, I loved learning more about him. The timing was perfect! During this unsettling period for our country, his strength and conviction can be an encouragement to all of us.

Betsy Burch ■

### A Perspective on Our Community

## You can help keep our firefighters safe

By Chief Ronald J. Siarnicki

National Fallen Firefighters Foundation

Hundreds of firefighters across the country have COVID-19. The reality is harsh. Even with personal pro-

TECTIVE equipment and strong infection control procedures, hundreds of firefighters are sick. Some have died.

They're not looking for sympathy. They're not looking for glory. The nation's fire service is turning to you for help.

There's a lot you can do to make it safer for firefighters. And many of these same actions will help prevent harm to others on the front lines of the COVID-19 battle, like police officers, nurses, and doctors.

- Stay home and practice social distancing. We know it's getting tired and old. We know staying home is stressful and frustrating. But it's an essential action that keeps us all safe.
- Call 911 for emergencies only. If you need assistance, firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs will be there. If it isn't an emergency, many communities have stepped up their non-emergency lines to offer guidance during the crisis.
- Call 911 for emergencies only. That's not a typo—it's a reminder. If you think you have an emer-

gency, call 911. We don't want you to hesitate to call for real emergencies like heart attacks, household accidents, and small fires. These are emergencies and firefighters are here to take care of you.

- If you do need to call 911, alert the call-taker to anyone in your household that has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or has experienced any symptoms such as cough or fever. Firefighters will be there to help but will take the precautions needed to ensure they can keep doing their job throughout this pandemic. The 911 call-taker will likely ask additional questions. Please be patient and answer these questions.
- Make a list of all medications being taken by each member of your household, along with a medical history. Do it now, just in case. New rules in many communities will prevent relatives and friends from riding in the ambulance or even entering the hospital. We understand how scary this thought is, but being prepared

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