

yield money market fund.

Schilling said, "The district is in a good financial position as a whole."

Hinton requested all board members read and present questions regarding the 2019 audit prior to the June board meeting.

### Operational report

Langmaid and Deputy Chief Jim Rebitski answered questions from the board on the operational report presented via email to board members as follows:

- Staff morale remains high and they are unfazed by the pandemic. The department is focused on an increased level of training. Rebitski concurred that the atmosphere was good.
- COVID-19 costs are primarily due to sick leave and overtime backfill. Costs have reached \$14,269 for BFFRPD and are expected to increase, but 75% of expenses will be recovered through grants.
- Rebitski said BFFRPD has been approved for a Federal Emergency Management Agency grant, and most of the footwork was done in April. Once the submission gate is open, we're on it! he said.
- Staff members presenting with COVID-19 symptoms are tested and required to stay home.

"There's absolutely nothing unprecedented about the COVID-19—all you have to do is look at human history and there have been pandemics since there have been people, and I told staff members we are going to manage with one more risk and get through this," said Langmaid.

A copy of the Operational Report was provided to OCN on request. Some of the following points were discussed:

- Call volume has increased slightly since the "reopening" of the region, primarily in traffic accidents.
- With increased fire danger ratings, severity patrols have been implemented. Severity patrols consist of two employees patrolling on the lookout for potential smoke in the Black Forest area during certain fire danger conditions.
- Discussions will start soon to begin "proper long-term planning" for the BFFRPD fleet, since this was not done by previous administrations. It will include purchasing processes and preventative maintenance programs.
- The construction of a training facility has begun, and metal containers are being delivered for assembly of the first training building.
- Hinton said he was searching for a commer-

cial contract to raise the bay doors. Dowden recommended commercial building contractor CMG Corp. for the project. They have done an excellent job on Rocky Mountain Group Engineers facilities, and owner Chris Richardson is a firefighter, said Dowden.

### Disaster declaration extended

Nearhoof asked the board to approve Resolution 2020-07 to extend the disaster declaration until Dec. 31. See [www.ocn.me/v20n5.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v20n5.htm#bffrpd). The board unanimously approved the extension, 5-0.

### Financial report

Hinton gave the following update:

- Unrestricted funds as of the end of April were \$859,747, with a total of \$1.338 million of district funds.
- Expenses were incurred for a generator repair and annual maintenance, a plow and trailer and computer support.
- A reimbursement of legal fees for Tad McClurg. See [www.ocn.me/v20n3.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v20n3.htm#bffrpd).

The board accepted the financial report as presented, 5-0.

### Fire code review

Dowden said his employer, RMG Engineers, participates on code review committees with the Colorado Springs Housing and Building Association (CSHBA). He has been asked by Marla Novak of CSHBA to weigh in on a review of El Paso County Engineering Criteria Manual and Land Development Code Review. Chapter 6 is Fire Mitigation Wildland Fire Codes.

Langmaid said he was not aware the codes were under review. Dowden said it looks like it could be beneficial to the department if he remained involved and that Novak was not concerned that he was also a member of the BFFRPD board. A meeting between Langmaid, Rebitski and Dowden will take place to discuss the fine details.

Langmaid said he aims to prevent unwanted alterations to the codes, which could result in a loss of water supply if BFFRPD were to miss out on notifications from the Colorado Springs Planning Department, Electronic Development Application Review Program (EDARP) system, as they have in the past. Abendschan requested Dowden email the proposed fire code changes to the rest of the board.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

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Meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at BFFRPD Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for June 17. For updates, visit [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org).

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, May 27

## Board members sworn in; land purchase on horizon

By Natalie Barszcz

On May 27, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board held its regular meeting via Zoom and with restricted attendance at Station 1 to administer the oath to four of the five elected board members and to officially promote two firefighters to engineers. Other topics of discussion included a future land purchase, the effects of COVID-19 on TLMFPD, and preparing for the 2020 wildfire season.

Director Terri Hayes was excused.

**Board members sworn in**  
TLMFPD board President John Hildebrandt administered the oath of office to four of the five board members; all five retain their previous seats. Directors Jason Buckingham, Terri Hayes, Thomas Kelly, Roger Lance and Thomas Tharnish were re-elected. The board voted 6-0 to keep the same board positions that were held

before the May 5 board election.

The following applied for three-year term board positions:

- Jason Buckingham received 63 votes.
- Harold Goldback received 33 votes.
- Terri Hayes received 57 votes.
- Roger Lance received 65 votes.
- Eric Nappo received 28 votes.
- Thomas Tharnish 50 votes.

The following candidate applied for a two-year term:

- Thomas Kelly received 85 votes. He ran unopposed, so he won the board seat.

Fire Chief Chris Truty thanked all the applicants for considering a board position and encouraged them to apply again in the future. Lance said he received positive feedback from several neighbors on the voting day process.

### Future land purchase negotiations

At the end of the meeting, the board moved into an executive session to discuss matters pursuant to CRS 24-6-402(4)(e) to develop strategies for negotiations and instruct negotiators for a possible property acquisition and a land acquisition. After returning to the regular session, the board voted 6-0 to authorize Truty to pursue the following:

- Provide a letter of interest to a developer on a future land parcel.
- Begin negotiations for a future property purchase.

No further information was provided.

### COVID-19 update

Truty said the following about the effects of COVID-19:

- Call volume has declined, and the number of people being hospitalized is going down. Holding the TLMFPD state of emergency for at least another



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