

**Financial report**

Hinton said the district was at 35.1% of the budget year to date and roughly 5.4% better than the projected goal of the 2020 budget. Dowden asked if BFFRPD were under budget due to reduced expenses during the COVID-19 period. Langmaid said spending had been reduced to see what might happen, and now that we are ready to purchase, the supply chain is slow and we cannot make the intended purchases. The board accepted the financial report 4-0.

**Facilities update**

Langmaid said that Chris Richardson of CMG Corp. had completed an inspection of Station 1 and determined that the caulk has never been updated in the building's lifespan, which could be the cause of the leaks from the upstairs balcony. Richardson recommended that before undergoing a major repair project to the concrete and raising doors, the whole building would require re-caulking, and he also noted that ramps might be needed to comply with an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirement.

Hinton questioned the need to make the building ADA compliant since that would require an elevator, and initially there was no ADA requirement, and that

would have been grandfathered into the design. Langmaid said the caulking needs to be fixed regardless and he is waiting for a quote for the re-caulking from CMG Corp.

**Fire Geographic Information Systems**

Langmaid said they are seeking a Fire Geographic Information Systems vendor to assist with the creation of a Wildland Urban Interface Preplan along with an Emergency Operations Plan in preparation for a unique event such as a tornado or a plane crash that would likely result in a wildland fire.

**Land development code**

Langmaid said they are talking to land stakeholders regarding the proposed land development code changes that will require some additional staff duties, but ultimately it is in the hands of the El Paso Board of County Commissioners.

**Training update**

Langmaid said the Conex containers have been delivered and stacked, and painting is almost complete, so the fire training facility at Station 1 is moving forward. Capt. Chris Piepenburg has been conducting Water Supply Tactic and Medical Trauma training, and the

Wildland Fire patrols continue.

**Community risk**

Terry Stokka of Friends of Black Forest noticed that many homes in Black Forest did not have visible address signs and notified residents that BFFRPD has a program that produces high visibility signs for a cost of \$25, and to date BFFRPD has received 50 requests for the signs. See [www.ocn.me/v20n6](http://www.ocn.me/v20n6) page 26 for information or visit [www.bffire.org/community](http://www.bffire.org/community).

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

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**Correction**

In the BFFRPD article in June issue of OCN, "Pierce Manufacturing Inc." should have been "Arrow Manufacturing Inc." OCN regrets the error.

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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 July 15. For updates, visit [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org).

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*Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, June 24*

# Annexation complications; office space purchase

By Natalie Barszcz

On June 24, the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board met at Station 1 and via Zoom virtual conference to solve unexpected annexation complications, accept the 2019 audit, and witness the swearing in of the division chief of Logistics position. They also held an executive session that resulted in the approval to purchase administrative office space and heard about more temporary road closures, including Monument Hill Road.

Board Vice President Roger Lance and Treasurer Jason Buckingham were excused.

**Station 1 annexation**

Chief Chris Truty explained to the board that although TLMFPD had requested Station 1 be annexed into the Town of Monument (TOM) in 2019 and the town granted the annexation on Jan. 6, 2020, it was not realized at the time of the application that TLMFPD did not own the deed to Station 1 due to an outstanding lease-purchase agreement. See [www.ocn.me/v19n7.htm#tlfmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v19n7.htm#tlfmfpd) and [www.ocn.me/v19n11.htm#mbot2](http://www.ocn.me/v19n11.htm#mbot2)

Director Tom Tharnish, who is also director of Public Works for the town, said the TOM cannot proceed until it has the deed in its possession and it was decided that paying off the lease would be the best solution to avoid re-starting the process of annexation. The Monument Board of Trustees (BOT) granted a six-month extension to finalize the annexation. See related June 15 BOT article on page 6.

Truty requested that the board approve paying the loan one year earlier by borrowing from the Capital Reserves. This would also save about \$4,000 in interest.

The board moved to approve a non-budgeted amount, not to exceed \$142,000 from the Capital Reserves account to pay off the remaining debt on the Station 1 lease. The board vote carried, 4-0-1 with Tharnish abstaining.

**2019 audit accepted**

The board heard the 2019 audit presented via Zoom by Mitch Downs and Amber Stoops from Osborne, Parsons, & Rosacker LLP. The audit was carried out remotely by Stoops and Mike Collins due to COVID-19 distancing, with assistance from District Accountant Becky Weese and Director of Administration Jennifer Martin. Stoops said there were no significant difficulties completing the audit or issues or deficiencies with the audit and no management overrides.

Downs said auditing remotely does create some timing issues, but he felt comfortable that the auditing standards were met and that remote auditing would continue into the future with the pandemic. The audit would be held open for a week to allow board members time to review it since the audit was delivered to TLMFPD on the day of the board meeting.

After the presentation, Weese said there were no adjustments required for the audit.

The board accepted the audit as presented, 5-0.

**Chief of Logistics sworn in**

Truty introduced the new Division Chief of Logistics Capt. Dean Wahl. Board President John Hildebrandt administered the oath of office and Lt. Mauricio Ayala presented Wahl with a department helmet. "I started three weeks ago at TLMFPD, and it already feels like home," said Wahl.

This new position was created to relieve administrative responsibilities that were spread across multiple staff members, with a primary focus on fleet and station management and maintenance.

**Administrative office space purchase approved**

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m. and the board moved into executive session to discuss property acquisition and land strategy.

When the board returned to the regular meeting, it unanimously approved items related to relocating from the district's leased administrative offices in Suite 103 to purchased space in the same building:

- To purchase suites 102 and 104 in Jackson Creek Commerce Center at 16055 Old Forest Point, for a price not to exceed \$1.05 million, pending an appraisal of the property to be financed through a partial down payment of \$250,000 and a 10-year lease/purchase agreement with Community Bank of Colorado.
- An expenditure of \$25,000 from the Capital Reserves Account for the remodel of the suites as needed.

**Note:** The district has been leasing space for about \$36,500 a year since November 2017. See [www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlfmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v17n12.htm#tlfmfpd).

**I-25/Gap closures will affect Monument traffic**

Trost said he learned the following at the latest I-25/Gap project meeting:

- The east side of the Greenland exit will be shifting and closures to the southbound lanes are next. TLMFPD will have emergency access throughout the 45-day closure.
- Monument Hill Road will temporarily close to accommodate a wildlife crossing underpass. Northbound will be closed at Misty Acres Boulevard, but local traffic will be allowed access to the Colorado Heights Camping Resort. A hard closure will be set at the resort entrance going northbound. Southbound will be closed at Misty Acres Boulevard with local traffic access to the Telios Law Office entrance. A hard closure will occur just south of the Telios entrance.
- A study of wildlife vehicle collisions resulting in accidents was conducted to determine the placement of the wildlife underpasses.
- The widening of Monument Hill Bridge is scheduled for late 2021.

For updated information on the I-25 Gap project, text I25Gap to 21000 to get alerts or visit their Facebook page @I25SouthGapProject, or visit [www.i25gap@cdot.gov](http://www.i25gap@cdot.gov), or sign up for email updates at [i25gap@cdot.us](mailto:i25gap@cdot.us), or call the project hotline at 1 (720)-745-5434. See [www.ocn.me/v19n11.htm#mbot1](http://www.ocn.me/v19n11.htm#mbot1).

**Chief's report**

Truty gave the following update:

- In 2021, all employers will be required to increase pension contributions to help shore up stability to employee pensions in the future. TLMFPD will contribute 8.5%, with a 0.5% increase each year until it reaches 12% in 2028.
- The planning for the 2021 budget will be conservative with the exception of necessary expendi-

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