

District welcomes new employees

Parker welcomed new employees to the district: Michael Boyett accepted the position of chief waste plant operator and has about 35 years of experience in wastewater management. Amy Acevedo occupies the water quality specialist position and brings more than 15 years of experience to her role. Office Manager Tanja Smith announced Sharon Lewis as a new part-time employee. She will be trained to prepare for the anticipated maternity leaves of two accounting staff members.

Water main replacement project

Preparations for the district's annual water main replacement program are scheduled to begin July 7 with an official start of the project set for July 27. The engineers, GMS Inc., plan to start at Candlewood Court, move onto Hunting Beach Drive, and end at Mission Hill Way. Project savings of about \$250,000 prompted staff to explore the feasibility of adding the Westchester Drive cul de sac as well, Parker commented, but the

final determination would depend on asphalt replacement costs.

Additional updates

- Tom Sistare of Hoelting and Co. Inc. presented the district's 2019 audit findings as a clean report.
- The Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority conducted a virtual meeting for June. Hodge informed directors that he would be serving on a subcommittee that explores general aspects of regionalization.
- Other projects under consideration include a drinking water delivery system called the Northern Delivery Pipeline. Donala is not currently a participant in the project but provides information as requested. Similarly, Hodge expressed interest in considering participation in Triview's Stonewall Springs Reservoir Complex, see <https://www.ocn.me/v20n6.htm#tvmd>. He and Parker plan to meet with Triview for preliminary discussions.

- The board passed resolutions that expressed appreciation for exceptional performance demonstrated by former General Manager Kip Petersen and former President Ken Judd during their years of service.

The meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Board meetings are normally held on the third Thursday of the month. The next board meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. July 16. The meeting may be held in person or as a conference/online video meeting depending on the status of coronavirus restrictions; call (719)488-3603 or access www.donalawater.org to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80921. When the board meets in person, meetings are held in the district office conference room. See <https://www.donalawater.org/> to access prior meeting minutes and the 2020 meeting calendar.

Jennifer Kaylor may be reached at jenniferkaylor@ocn.me.

El Paso County Planning Commission, June 2 and 16

Two special uses in the Tri-Lakes area recommended for approval

By Helen Walklett

At its June meetings, the El Paso County Planning Commission heard two special-use requests that had been elevated to public hearings due to objections. The first was a request to reconsider an expired approval to allow an existing recreational vehicle (RV) repair business to continue. The second was a request by Verizon for a new tower to improve its cell coverage along the Roller Coaster Road corridor.

Turbo's Mobile RV Service

At its June 2 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended for approval a request by Eric VanDenHoek for reconsideration of an expired special use to allow RV repair as a rural home occupation at his property. The 5-acre property, zoned RR-5 (residential rural), is northwest of the Baptist Road and I-25 interchange, on the south side of Doolittle Road.

The existing business, Turbo's Mobile RV Service, which was started in 1999, was legalized by an administrative special use approval with a five-year time limitation in November 2014. The applicant reapplied for administrative approval of the expired special use in December 2019. Administratively approved special use applications are automatically limited to a five-year period and are then subject to renewal. However, the standard five-year expiration period does not apply to applications that are elevated to a public hearing unless the Planning Commission and the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adds a condition that imposes a time limitation. The applicant requested that no time limitation be imposed in this case.

When county staff notified adjacent property owners of the request, they received a complaint that elevated the application to the public hearing process.

However, Nina Ruiz, planning manager, Planning and Community Development, told the hearing that the applicant had met with the adjacent property owner to discuss his concerns and that a revised letter had now been submitted indicating that he no longer objected to the request.

The application was unanimously recommended for approval with a request for a waiver of the screening standards in the county's Land Development Code. The waiver request followed a letter received from the adjacent neighbor to the rear of the property, Monique French, requesting that no privacy fence be installed. French commented that she would rather see a changing mix of RVs than an unchanging fence and raised a serious concern that a fence could cause excessive drifts in winter, endangering her animals. In its resolution, the Planning Commission noted that "a privacy fence could cause the property to stand out and may actually defeat the purpose of the screening requirement, which is to mitigate visual impacts." The application went forward to be heard at the BOCC meeting on June 23. See BOCC article below.

New Verizon cell tower

The Planning Commission heard a request for approval of a special use for a Verizon cell tower at its June 16 meeting. The tower would be sited on part of a 35-acre property, zoned A-5 (Agricultural), and owned by Aspen Willow Estates at the southeast corner of the Higby Road and Happy Landing Drive intersection.

The tower would address a gap in Verizon cellular coverage that generally extends along the Roller Coaster Road corridor from Highway 105 to Hodgen Road. It would be designed to mimic a large pine tree with faux branches to conceal the antennae and would be 75 feet

tall and about 20 feet wide. A fenced equipment compound at the tower's base would house a generator and equipment storage facilities. Access to the site would be via Happy Landing Drive.

The tower would be in a stand of existing pine trees in the southwest corner of the site. It would extend approximately 30 feet above the height of the existing trees, which the county noted in its report to the Planning Commission "may make it difficult for the tower to fully blend in with the existing landscape." However, 75 feet is the minimum height required to meet Verizon's coverage objectives. The tower is expected to accommodate the equipment of two additional service providers in the future.

The application was elevated to the public hearing process after a letter of opposition to the plans was received that objected to the tower's proposed proximity to the Higby Estates residential area. No one spoke in opposition at the hearing. A resident spoke in support, referring to the current poor cell service in the area. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend the application for approval. The request is now scheduled to be heard at the BOCC meeting on July 14.

Master plan update

The commissioners continue to receive progress reports on the work to update the county master plan. There is an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the "Areas of Change" part of the project until July 12. To participate, visit the project's website at: <https://elpaso.hlplanning.com/>

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

El Paso Board of County Commissioners, June 9 and 23

CARES Act funds to be disbursed to Monument, Palmer Lake

By Helen Walklett

During June, the El Paso Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved agreements with the towns of Monument and Palmer Lake to enable the county to disperse to them some of the funding it received from the federal government under the CARES Act. The commissioners also made decisions relating to the Winsome development on Hodgen Road, the Gleneagle Golf Course redevelopment, and a special use request to allow a recreational vehicle (RV) business to continue operating.

CARES Act funds

At its meetings on June 9 and 23, the BOCC approved intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) between the county and the towns of Monument and Palmer Lake regarding the distribution of funding received under the CARES Act, which is to be used to mitigate the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The county received \$125.704 million and voted on May 5 to disburse 45% of this funding to municipalities within the county based on population size.

With a population of 6,997 (based on 2018 data) Monument is receiving \$554,033. Palmer Lake, with a 2018 population of 2,793, is being allocated \$221,154. Under the terms of the IGAs, any of these funds that are reasonably expected not to be used by Dec. 30 must be returned to the county by Sept. 1. The county will then return all unspent funding to the federal government

by the year's end.

Winsome pre-development site grading

At the June 23 meeting, the commissioners approved a request by McCune Ranch LLC to authorize the county engineer to issue a construction permit for pre-development site grading at its proposed Winsome Filing No.1 final plat ahead of final plat approval. The filing, which will have 47 residential lots, is the first 164.4-acre phase of the 767-acre subdivision at the northwest corner of the Hodgen Road and Meridian Road intersection. The BOCC approved the preliminary plan in July 2019. See <https://www.ocn.me/v19n8.htm#epbocc>.

The Land Development Code requires the BOCC to consider pre-development site grading when it approves a preliminary plan. In this instance, the applicant did not include approval of pre-development site grading with its preliminary plan application, hence this stand-alone request for the grading.

Gleneagle Residential Infill

Also at the June 23 meeting, the BOCC approved the partial release of a letter of credit for \$393,421 following the completion and satisfactory inspection of 70% of the grading and erosion control work at the Gleneagle Residential Infill Filing 2. This is part of the redevelopment of the former Gleneagle Golf Course site.

Turbo's Mobile RV Service

The commissioners approved the renewal of a special

use for Turbo's Mobile RV Service at their June 23 meeting. The request by Eric VanDenHoek was for reconsideration of an expired special use to allow his RV repair business to operate from his 5-acre property northwest of the Baptist Road and I-25 interchange, on the south side of Doolittle Road. The application was treated as a consent item, meaning there was no further discussion.

The El Paso County Planning Commission heard the case at its June 2 meeting and sent it to the BOCC with a recommendation for approval. See EPCPC article above.

Other decisions

- June 9—Approved the application by Z Golf Food Beverage Services LLC, d/b/a Wedgewood at Black Forest, for a change of manager of its hotel and restaurant license at 12375 Black Forest Drive.
- June 23—Approved a request to establish the survey area and set July 21 as the hearing date for the application by Black Forest Diversified Services LLC, d/b/a Firehouse on the Run 2, for a hotel and restaurant liquor license at 12480 Black Forest Road.

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