

here.”

Black Forest resident Johnny Schmidt asked about volunteer onboarding and training with respect to COVID-19 restrictions. Burns said

when COVID starts to “release its grip” they will begin the volunteer program again.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.  
\*\*\*\*\*

The next Donald Wescott fire district meeting is scheduled for Aug. 18 at 4 p.m. at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meetings are usually on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. For infor-

mation, call Executive Administrator Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680 or see [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org).

Allison Robenstein can be contacted at [allisonrobenstein@ocn.me](mailto:allisonrobenstein@ocn.me).

### Pinon Pines Metropolitan District 1, July 13

## Reduction in mill levy sought; water restrictions, trail closures addressed

By Natalie Barszcz

On July 13, the new Pinon Pines Metropolitan District (PPMD) 1 board met via teleconference to discuss options to reduce the mill levy; to hear the reason behind several trail closures; and to approve the 2019 audit.

Board members for PPMD 1 are: Board President Mike Hitchcock, Vice President Mike Slavick, Secretary Chris Paulene, AJ Slavick and Ashley Franklin.

PPMD 1 is a financing district that collects property taxes for the operating district, Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD). FLMD manages public infrastructure, water, wastewater, storm drainage, parks and trails, landscaping, and streetlight services for the residents of PPMD 1 and 2 and businesses in PPMD 3.

### Bond refinancing explored

Since the election of the new resident-only PPMD 1 board in May, the board directed FLMD Manager Ann Nichols to provide options for lowering the mill levy for the residents. Nichols introduced the board to Kyle Thomas, senior vice president of D.A. Davidson & Co., the original underwriter of the Debt Service Mill Levy Bond, who presented the board with an overview of the PPMD 1 bond structure and discussed possible finance options to lower the current mill levy.

**Note:** The debt service mill levy helps cover some of the repayment obligations incurred by both PPMD 1 and FLMD for past development activities with respect to the utility, parks, trails, stormwater and road infrastructure.

Board President Mike Hitchcock made the following comments:

- A saving of 10-12 mills on property taxes would be significant for the residents.
- Waiting would not be beneficial for homeowners who might be struggling financially.
- We need to get out of what we are doing now by the end of the year and take advantage of the historically low interest rates that exist today.

Thomas said decreasing the mill levy from 44.531 mills to 32 mills but still maintaining a reserve to pay down the balloon loan when it hits would be optimal, and he could come back with a bank proposal and everything could be finalized by mid-December in time to set the mill levy for 2021.

District Counsel Russell A. Dykstra said a decision by September



**Above:** A scenic view of Bristlecone Lake on July 24 shows the summertime low water level. Since June 2019, the reservoir has been the sole water source for the residents of the Forest Lakes development for both drinking water and irrigation. The lake receives surface water flow from Beaver Creek, and flows are reduced when there are sustained high temperatures and a lack of significant precipitation. The reservoir is about 65 surface acres and has varying depths with a 55-foot depth at its deepest and has not been known to fall more than 10 feet. FLMD management has asked the residents to adopt the recommended Stage 1 Water Shortage Provisions posted at [www.forestlakesmetrodistrict.com](http://www.forestlakesmetrodistrict.com). *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

**downtown monument art hop**  
downtownmonument.org  
**Thursday, Aug. 20, 5-8 pm**  
**Art Hop is Back for August!**  
(and hopefully for September)

- Select merchants will be open
- Controlled numbers of people in stores
- Outdoor activities (e.g., band on Front St.)
- Food available at local restaurants and food trucks.

is necessary to meet the December deadline. The board directed Thomas to return in August with a new financial proposal for the bond issue. “Let’s get this as close to a complete package as we can and make it happen,” said Hitchcock.

### Pinon Lake Trail closure, West Valley Trail questions

Hitchcock said Hammersmith Management, which manages the Homeowners Association, sent a “terse” mass email to residents in early July, which created a “firestorm” when the residents learned that the Pinon Lake Trail would remain closed due to steep terrain on both sides of the spillway.

Nichols said the following in response:

- Residents complained about the steep and slippery slopes, and after she had reviewed the hazardous terrain with an engineer, the closure was deemed necessary.
- Whatever we decide to do will have to be approved by a state dam inspector.
- The goal is to make the trail safe for everyone, and it should be a simple fix.
- An update to the PPMD 1 community will be provided once a solution has been found.

Hitchcock said homeowners in PPMD 1 were promised the trail system, but in four years he’d not been able to walk on the West Valley Trail, the trail west of the gate. He said that at the last combined meeting, Secretary James Boulton, vice president/project manager of Classic Homes, was going to address the issue and provide a plan for opening the West Valley Trail, which would create a trail on the south side of Bristlecone Lake.

Nichols said it may be possible to open the West Valley Trail once construction in Filing 5 of Phase 2 has been



**Above:** Residents demand answers to the sudden closure of the Pinon Lake Trail in the Pinon Pines 1 subdivision in Forest Lakes. The popular trail was only open to the residents of the Forest Lakes Community and it remains closed until a solution can be found to fix the problem of the steep hills and hazardous terrain located around the dam. *Photo by Natalie Barszcz.*

completed, and she would add the issue to the agenda for the next FLMD board meeting, whenever that might be. Resident Fredrick Stein said the last three monthly FLMD board meetings had been cancelled and we should at least have the opportunity to be heard. “Communication is the key,” he said, urging the FLMD board to hold an informational session with residents before decisions are made. *See [www.ocn.me/v20n6.htm#ppmd1](http://www.ocn.me/v20n6.htm#ppmd1).*

### Voluntary water restrictions

On July 21, Nichols announced via the district website that Stage 1 Water Shortage Provisions would go into effect on July 24, due to the hot and dry conditions resulting in a lack of flow from Beaver Creek to Bristlecone Lake. FLMD’s website states the restrictions are voluntary and asks users to be prudent in their outdoor use of water, limiting outdoor watering to no more than

### Palmer Lake Art Group

## 2020 Art Scholarship Award

Artist Graduates of Lewis Palmer School District 38



artist  
**Kennedy Schuh**

\$2500 Award • Palmer Ridge High School  
-- will attend The Art Institute of Chicago

*I plan to attend the School of the Art Institute of Chicago this coming fall in the hopes of creating a career out of my art by surrounding myself with others that are just as passionate about it as I am. The dream would be to be able to support myself as a freelance artist after graduation or to find a career through internships promoted by the Art Institute.*

**NOTICE: 2020 Color Splash Show is CANCELLED**

**2020 Art Scholarship Sponsors**  
Thank You for your support!

Susan Arnold/Clyde Smith  
Bella Art & Frame  
Covered Treasures Bookstore  
Mark Dixon  
Discount Sales, Inc

Monique Michaud  
Jeffery Sikorski, O.D.  
Tri-Lakes Printing  
Karen Wiens/Lynn Roth  
The Wine Seller

Congratulations, Kennedy! Don’t miss Kennedy Schuh’s art on display until the end of August, at **Bella Art & Frame**, 183 Washington St, downtown historic Monument, Colorado.

Since 1977, The Palmer Lake Art Group has been awarding art scholarships to graduating District 38 student artists planning professions in the visual arts.

More information at [PalmerLakeArtGroup.com](http://PalmerLakeArtGroup.com)