



Above: On Oct. 14, Mayor Bill Bass recognized Steve Orcutt for 22 years of service to Palmer Lake. Orcutt is Palmer Lake’s water supervisor and holds the following certifications: Class A Water Operator, Class “C” Wastewater License, Class “4” Water Distribution and Class “1” Wastewater Collection. Bass also introduced Charles Roubidoux, a new certified water operator for the town. The Water Department, with three full-time employees, is responsible for maintaining the town’s water treatment facility, two wells, and the upper and lower reservoirs. They repair water main leaks and hydrants and assist homeowners with frozen pipes. From left are Charles Roubidoux, Steve Orcutt, and Bill Bass. *Photo by Jackie Burhans*

ment.

The cost of a new meter, with accessories and inspection, is listed on the town’s fee schedule at \$650.

The board also discussed whether to use a 100-year or a 300-year depletion rule for planning purposes. Trustee Nicole Currier pointed out that El Paso County uses a 300-year depletion standard. Bass said GMS had recommended using the 100-year standard and added that the steps the board is considering are not unusual and, “We are doing what is in the best interest of Palmer Lake, things that we haven’t been doing that we should be doing.”

The consensus of the board was to have GMS attend a board meeting to answer questions and to have a draft of the policy ready for review in January. Collins said her goal was to have any well fees or costs built into the budget.

Short-term rental policy takes shape

Trustee Jessica Farr, who owns a short-term rental (STR) property in Palmer Lake, excused herself from the Oct. 14 meeting at the beginning of the STR discussion. At previous meetings, the board Planning Commission and staff had roughed out a policy based on these principal criteria:

- An STR is defined as less than 30 days.
- STR properties are classified as owner-occupied or non-owner occupied; the fee for owner-occupied is \$250 and the fee for non-owner-occupied is \$400.
- A non-owner-occupied STR can’t be within 1,000 feet of another non-owner-occupied STR.
- All STRs must apply for a business license annually.

Karen Stuth said the town should restrict the number of STRs, arguing that the town does not know how many such properties currently exist and that the next step should be a moratorium, as Elizabeth and Leadville have put in place, until the STRs have been inventoried. She said it would be a mistake to wait too long to limit the number of STRs and that too many STRs cause “a small-town death spiral” by raising the cost of housing and making it impossible for the town to attract workers.

Collins agreed the number of STRs is not presently known.

Trustees Nicole Currier and Havenar doubted the requirement that non-owner occupied STRs be 1,000 feet apart was workable.

Trustee Dawson said he wanted to prevent large investors from buying too large a share of the town’s houses for use as STRs.

Bass was not concerned that too

large a portion of the town would come to be used as STRs.

Collins said staff would work on a draft of the policy that removed the 1,000-foot separation requirement and limited the number of STRs to a percentage of the town’s residences. She estimated it would take more than a month to complete a draft of the policy.

Draft budget updated

At the Oct. 14 meeting, Collins gave the board copies of an updated 2022 budget, with more accurate numbers for revenue from property taxes and less money budgeted for contingencies. She said staff was hopeful grants would be obtained to cover some costs related to the Town Hall refurbishment and of hiring a consultant to handle the town’s Master Plan update. She noted that the cost of workers compensation had increased, but the cost of medical benefits might go down. Refining the budget would continue until the public hearing on the budget, she said. She asked if the board had any direction to provide to staff as they continued their work on the budget. A shortfall in the draft budget was noted by Havenar and Farr.

Bass suggested the work on the budget could continue at the board retreat to be held the next day.

Water systems to be interconnected

The board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 50-2021, which creates an IGA between Monument and Palmer Lake to connect their water systems to mitigate water service emergencies. The resolution specifies the design fee for the interconnect is not to exceed \$2,500. The expected cost to the town for the work is \$6,500. Collins said the interconnect would be funded in part by federal American Rescue Plan

money.

Public hearing on replat resolution held

A public hearing on Kurt Ehrhardt’s request to replat a property at 717 Westward Lane was held at the Oct. 28 meeting.

Ehrhardt explained the property he intended to develop was a large one, some of which is in a flood plain. The resolution to replat would divide the property into three lots, he said, the first of which has an existing house, the second of which would have a new “affordable” house built on it by Ehrhardt, and the third of which, the portion in the flood plain, would be donated to the town for use as a park. Ehrhardt

Fuel Church

Location: Meeting at Mountain Community Mennonite Church
643 State Highway 105, Palmer Lake

NEW TIME: Sunday Service in-person at 11:00am
Live service streaming on fuelchurch.org at 11:40am

Non-denominational Spirit-filled

Need prayer? email us at info@fuel.org





Monument Hill Kiwanis Club

presents the

15th Annual North Pole at Tri-Lakes Arts and Crafts Fair

WHEN: Saturday, December 4th, 9 am - 4 pm

WHERE: Grace Best Education Center, 66 Jefferson Street

In Historic Monument, across from St Peter Catholic Church
Live Holiday Music will be performed throughout the day by D38 choirs/bands & local talent.
Same weekend as Monument Small Town Christmas.



Admission is FREE *with* donation of a nonperishable food item, cash, or a board game for **Tri-Lakes Cares**

Admission is FREE *with* a new or used sporting goods donation to **4KidzSports**.





Making a Difference for Youth and Our Community

For additional show information please contact Bob Nissen:
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