

deployments. He received numerous commendations and awards while in the military. He worked in Fountain as a patrol sergeant, retiring after 12 years. He came to Monument in 2019.

**Kratom**

The board heard a presentation urging it to reconsider a Nov. 18, 2019 moratorium on the sale of Kratom in the town. See [www.ocn.me/v19n12.htm#mbot](http://www.ocn.me/v19n12.htm#mbot).

According to C.M. "Mac" Haddow, a lobbyist for the American Kratom Association, Kratom is derived from a poppy plant in Southeast Asia related to the coffee family. There are between 11 million and 16 million Kratom users in the U.S. The drug is used most often as pain relief, a way to curb opioid use, or to manage withdrawal symptoms from opioids. According to Haddow, the typical American Kratom user is married or partnered, between 30 and 50 years old, and employed with an income between \$35,000 and \$75,000.

The Food and Drug Administration has discussed scheduling the drug but has not moved forward with any plans. Between 1999 and 2017, there were 15 known Kratom-related deaths in Colorado. Haddow said 14 of those were mislabeled and found to be caused by other drugs present in the body. Trustee Jim Romanello took this opportunity to joke about other mislabeled drug deaths, then explained he has used Kratom himself.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse found Kratom has no significant addiction liability.

Haddow suggested instead of a full ban on sales, the board instead impose an age limit for purchase,

noting the board is typically open to freedom of choice for its citizens.

Two people spoke about their own Kratom use. Scott Lee began using it after a longboard accident left him with severe pain. As a three-years-sober alcoholic, Lee tried many other types of non-medicinal pain management systems before finding Kratom. A 25-year resident of Monument said she also tried many pain-management therapies after a hysterectomy.

Stephens was still hesitant to allow Kratom sales because there is insufficient research. He said this "smacks of the smoking industry," because people were initially told cigarettes were good for you, but as research came in it was the opposite.

Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott reminded the board the last time Kratom was presented, it was to set up manufacturing in Monument. Haddow said a reputable manufacturer would be a great business for the town, noting Colorado is one of the largest Kratom consumer markets in the country. As a researcher who performs medical device and drug inquiry, Elliott said anecdotal information isn't enough to change her mind.

Based on a Kratom consumer database Haddow mentioned, Trustee Mitch LaKind asked how many Monument residents are registered. Haddow said there were 48 people. "I would have no issue with it being sold in Monument if it is helping people," LaKind said.

**Mountain View Electric agreement intact**

The town and Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) have an agreement allowing the electric

company to use town infrastructure and rights-of-way. It has been in effect since 2006 but has come up for renegotiation. MVEA pays 3% of each customer's bills to the town in return for infrastructure use.

Town Attorney Andrew Richie said this is a straightforward agreement.

Although there were no public comments during the hearing, after the vote was taken resident Ryan LeVier expressed concern the resolution limited town residents to only one choice for their electricity. Clark said she had numerous calls from residents raising concern about the lack of choices. Mayor Don Wilson made clear this resolution only allows MVEA to use town infrastructure. Wilson said, "We don't choose our electrical providers for Monument. It is an open market. If there was somebody wanting to compete with Mountain View Electrical, they'd be happy to do that."

The meeting adjourned 8:37 p.m.

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The Monument Board of Trustees usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 1. Call 719-884-8014 or see [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org) for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets for BOT or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Board of Trustees.

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*Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, Feb. 4, 11, and 25*

**Board appoints new trustee; water debate continues**



**Above:** Newly appointed Palmer Lake Trustee Darin Dawson is sworn in by Town Administrator Dawn Collins. Dawson replaces Bob Mutu, who resigned in February. Photo by James Howald.

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans

The Palmer Lake Board of Trustees (PLBOT) met four times in February. They held a special meeting on Feb. 4. On Feb. 11, the first of two regular meetings was held. On Feb. 25, the board held both a workshop meeting and the second regular meeting.

After appointing a new trustee to the seat vacated by Bob Mutu's retirement at the Feb. 4 special meeting, issues related to water—addressing storm water, clarifying the number of water taps available and deciding how to handle taps purchased but never used, updating the rules concerning well permits, and implementing water rate increases that were approved by the previous board—took center stage at the meetings.

The board also began a discussion on short-term rental policy, heard a report from the Palmer Lake Police Department on its new traffic enforcement program, approved two special event permits and granted a new business license.

**Dawson appointed to board**

Seven applicants for the vacant seat of the board attended the special meeting on Feb. 4: James Amato, Shana Ball, Darin Dawson, Kory DeAngelo, Kevin Dreher, Kelsey Hemp, and Cindy Graff Kuchinsky.

After an opening statement, each applicant answered questions from Mayor Bill Bass ranging from how they would handle an issue that the public opposes to their opinions on recreational cannabis and how they would interact with the town's agencies. Trustees asked occasional follow-up questions.

When the questioning concluded, Trustee Karen Stuth moved to appoint Kuchinsky to the board but there was no second. Trustee Jessica Farr moved to

appoint Dawson and the motion was seconded by Trustee Sam Padgett. Bass, Trustee Nicole Currier, Farr and Padgett voted yes; Trustees Glant Havenar and Stuth voted no.

At the Feb. 11 meeting, the board voted unanimously to approve Resolution 14-2021 appointing Dawson to the board. Following the vote on the resolution, Dawson was sworn in by Town Administrator Dawn Collins.

**Board approves storm water strategy**

At the Feb. 11 meeting, John Chavez of Chavez Consulting Inc. LLC presented the Program Description Document (PDD) he prepared for the town, which details how the town will comply with Colorado's regulations for handling storm water. The PDD provides the primary regulatory mechanism used by the state to evaluate the town's compliance, Chavez said.

A year earlier, the previous board approved \$26,250 for Chavez to begin work on the document. At that time, Chavez told the board that the town had received a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit in 2018, but that the work to bring the town into compliance with state regulations required by the permit had never been done. He said that to comply, the town would need to have a PDD to document its storm water treatment strategy that covered:

- Public involvement.
- Public education and outreach.
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination.
- Oversight of new construction.
- Post-construction storm water management.
- Municipal operations pollution prevention.

In his initial presentation, Chavez also said if the town did not meet the state's requirements, the state would step in and develop a plan for the town.

At the Feb. 11 meeting, Chavez explained the 2010 Census had classified Palmer Lake as part of the Colorado Springs urbanized area and that decision had obligated the town to get an MS4 permit. Chavez said that when he began working on Palmer Lake's storm water strategy in 2020, the town was three years behind schedule in its compliance efforts.

Chavez said that in June of 2020 he worked with Palmer Lake's attorney to update the town's ordinances to provide the authority to implement and enforce storm water regulations. Chavez summarized the changes he made to the town's code as follows:

- Title 8 of the town's code was updated to define and prohibit illegal discharges, and the definition was aligned with the state's statutes.
- Title 14 was updated to require work done in the town's right of way to prevent and minimize storm water pollution.

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