

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Feb. 24

# Officer Lucas honored; Station 1 remodel to begin May 2



**Above:** From left are Fire Chief Andy Kovacs, Monument Police Officer Rachael Lucas, MPD Chief Sean Hemingway and board President John Hildebrandt. Kovacs presented Lucas with a letter of commendation and the “Chief’s Coin” for the care and compassion she demonstrated on Jan. 28. Although off-duty at the time, she responded to a call involving a juvenile court-order protection and successfully de-escalated a tense situation that resulted in a favorable outcome. *Photo by Jennifer Martin.*

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board meeting held at Station 1 on Feb. 24, the majority of staff and members of the public attended via Zoom conference call in accordance with COVID-19 state guidelines. Fire Chief Andy Kovacs awarded a letter of commendation and the “chiefs coin” to a police officer, and the board reviewed the final plans for the Station 1 remodel and reviewed the 2020 budget.

Secretary Mike Smaldino was excused.

### Lucas receives letter of commendation

Kovacs recognized Police Officer Rachael Lucas of the Monument Police Department (MPD) for her actions during a medical emergency on Jan. 28. TLMFPD was assisting MPD with a situation that could have had an unfavorable outcome had Lucas not responded to the scene to de-escalate the situation, said Kovacs. Lucas assisted the fire crews, and her actions and professionalism went above and beyond what was required. It was a fantastic example of TLMFPD’s values of excellence, integrity, loyalty, respect, and service, said Kovacs.

Monument Police Chief Sean Hemingway said he has never seen a police department and a fire department with such a good working relationship that was well-established before he and Kovacs arrived. He thanked TLMFPD for its continued support and for recognizing Lucas.

### Station 1 remodel starting

Division Chief of Logistics Dean Wahl presented the current D2C Architects Inc. plan for the Station 1 remodel and said the following:

- The district has not made any significant upgrades to Station 1 since it was built in 1998.
- Personnel are running on treadmills and inhaling diesel exhaust fumes under the current constrained layout.
- Station 1 can now be upgraded to match the growth of the community, a concept that was limited until the 2020 purchase of 15 acres east of the station, and the annexation into the Town of Monument that followed.
- The building upgrades will now expand over the previous property line to the east of the station, and the remaining acreage will be developed into a Regional Training Center.
- The project base bid is \$1.7 mil-

lion and within the approved budget. Mark Young Construction is scheduled to begin the remodel on May 2, with a projected completion by Oct. 15.

Wahl requested the board consider four maintenance items and upgrades to be completed during the remodel phase for an additional total of \$48,456, leaving any concrete and asphalt installations until 2022 during the Training Center development.

The board approved the additional costs, 6-0.

Wahl thanked the board and said, “the crews will appreciate the upgrades.”

**Note:** TLMFPD has been discussing remodeling Station 1 since January 2018, but the plans have been delayed multiple times. See [www.ocn.me/v18n2.htm#tlmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v18n2.htm#tlmfpd) and [www.ocn.me/v19n7.htm#tlmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v19n7.htm#tlmfpd).

### Regional Training Center—Station 1

Kovacs said a Training Center Development Working Group composed of Lt. Micah Coyle, Engineer Adam Wakefield, and Firefighter Golden Rains will represent all three shifts with the three battalion chiefs, and Wahl and Battalion Chief of Training Jonathan Bradley will lead the group. Training facilities such as South Metro Denver, Aurora Fire Rescue, City of Denver Fire Department, North Metro Denver, Boulder Fire Rescue and Poudre Fire Authority will be evaluated in the process, observing COVID-19 restrictions.

Moving forward, the group will develop short- and long-range plans for the remaining 14 acres at Station 1, with a phased-in approach to create the Regional Training Center. The board will be given a monthly progress report.

**Note:** This is a different regional training center from the one that opened in 2020 at Station 1, Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District.

### 2020 budget review

Kovacs said that in 2020 the district spent 90.5% of the total budget and \$882,019 was carried over to the starting balance for the 2021 budget. The excess resulted from the following budgeted funds:

- \$150,000 from the Capital Improvement Fund for the purchase of a Type 6 fire engine that was deferred until 2021.
- A \$200,000 savings from shift overtime that represented 73.8% of the allocated budget in 2020.
- \$300,000 was saved in Building Capital Outlay of the budgeted \$1 million.

- Several other small line items did not reach the proposed budget and contributed to the remaining balance.

### Financial update

Treasurer Jason Buckingham read the financial report as of Jan. 31 and said the following:

- The first and largest installment of property taxes is expected in March, and the change in finances will be drastic. The projected Property Tax revenue is \$9.2 million for 2021.
- Specific Ownership Taxes were higher than expected at \$79,925, representing 8.9% of the estimated annual projected revenue of \$900,000.
- Ambulance Fees were lower than normal at \$47,409, representing 5.8% of the budget with projected annual revenue of \$825,000.
- Impact Fees collected were \$5,439, representing 4.4% of the budget with a projected revenue of \$125,000.

Of note was \$141,000 received for the 2020 Wildland Deployments. The district has budgeted \$50,000 for deployments in 2021.

Expenses were \$718,535 for January and about 7.9% of the projected 2021 expense budget of \$9.1 million. Wages, the largest expense, totaled \$499,269, representing 8.7% of the budget with a projected annual expense of \$5.7 million.

The seven bank account balances will now be reflected on every monthly financial report to make the board aware of the funds accumulating for the various projects.

Eleven payments above \$2,500 were reviewed and all appeared appropriate and within budget. A few of the larger payments were:

- \$15,073 for the Station 1 remodel.
- \$16,648 for the annual radio fee.
- \$28,154 for ESO Solutions, record management software.

Bradley said the new ESO Solutions Record Management System will consolidate software systems to include incident reporting, medical reporting, and inspection services.

The board accepted the financial report as presented, 6-0.

### Mutual aid

Kovacs thanked the Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) for providing back-fill crew at Fire Station 3 when units were dispatched to a residential fire alarm that was upgraded in transit to a structure fire. The fire was quickly extinguished with minimal smoke damage. Units from Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD), Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD), Palmer Lake Fire Department (PLFD), and Falcon Fire Protection District (FFPD) assisted at the scene in the northeastern area of the district.

**Live fire incident investigation**  
President John Hildebrandt asked for

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