

Resolution 2021-04 for inclusion of property at 16910 Thompson Road, Colorado Springs CO, 80908.

The board approved the inclusion of property, 5-0.

Traffic concerns

Nearhoof said the chief had received a letter from Donna Porter thanking the first responders and staff at BFFRPD for responding to the scene on Dec. 30 when she was in a vehicle collision at Vollmer/Burgess Road. Thankfully,

there were no injuries and everyone on scene displayed efficiency, kindness and caring, which meant a lot at a confusing and stressful time, she wrote.

“There is a thankful person, sounds like the crews did a great job,” said Nearhoof.

Hinton said speeding at the Vollmer/Shoup Road intersection is still a problem and the cause of deadly accidents, with three wrecks so far this year.

Langmaid said there is some en-

ergy within the community to address that intersection, as the traffic flows increase from Colorado Springs and motorists pursue different routes out of the city.

Nearhoof said he would re-address the installation of lights at that intersection with the county commissioners.

“Thank you” BFFRPD

Nearhoof read a card from Scout Troop 70 thanking Rebitski for “working with them and allowing the boys to have a

fire and some fun!”

The board meeting adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at BFFRPD Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for April 21 at 7 p.m. For updates and minutes, visit www.bffire.org.

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, March 24

Chief impressed by collaboration during storm

By Natalie Barszcz

The Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board met on March 24 in person at Station 1 and via Zoom to discuss the winter storm response, the Station 1 remodel progress, and succession planning.

Winter storm collaboration

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said he was impressed with all of the TLMFPD staff and the partner agencies that had collaborated on Sunday, March 14 during a storm that severely taxed the region. The unified command post at the Town of Monument (TOM) included the TOM Public Works Department, Monument Police Department (MPD), Palmer Lake Fire Department (PLFD), Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD), Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, and Falcon Fire Protection District (FFPD). Before the storm, TLMFPD hosted a conference call for about 10 regional partner agencies to make sure all resources would be collaborating during the storm.

Kovacs said TLMFPD documented 57 responses, of which 51 were stranded motorists and six were routine medical calls. Throughout the region, partner agencies documented and responded collectively to 81 stranded motorists. The numbers were likely higher as other crews assisted many more stranded motorists across the region as crews were dispatched to calls. When the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) closed I-25, Highway 105 and Highway 83, BFFRPD housed 57 stranded motorists at Station 1 and 19 at Station 2.

However, Kovacs said he was disappointed that the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) closed before the worst of the storm arrived. When the roads closed the ECC closed and the Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management should have made the ECC available throughout the storm, the first to open and the last to close to support incidents in the region, he said. Requests for tows and snowplows were met, but the collaborative recommendation for the future will be to close the ECC after the storm has ended.

Note: The ECC is a core resource that supports disaster response operations in the region.

Deputy Chief Randy Trost said that in the past and during the March 2019 Bomb Cyclone, the county would close I-25 at Baptist Road, creating a burden for the Monument community. Significant strides have been made to make the turn-around closure point Interquest Parkway, an area that can provide far more resources and greater disbursement for stranded motorists in a place often experiencing less severe weather conditions than Monument. “Attending the I-25 Emergency Services Working Group meetings has paid dividends for the Tri-Lakes area during the storm,” said Trost.

Trost said the El Paso County Search and Rescue track crews kept

three units in Northern El Paso County throughout the storm to help track and rescue stranded motorists.

Kovacs said he never had to rescue anyone with a Snowcat in his previous position in California and he is glad TLMFPD has that apparatus. He suggested the board consider replacing the current Snowcat with a newer model. See www.ocn.me/v19n4.htm#tlmfpd and www.ocn.me/v19n5.htm#tlmfpd.

“Kudos” to all the staff and the supporting agencies that assisted during the storm, said Kovacs.

Battalion Chief Mike Keough and Trost were on duty during the storm and will provide an after-action report at the April meeting.

Station 1 remodel

President John Hildebrandt said an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between Palmer Lake Sanitation District (PLSD) and TLMFPD for a temporary tap and service required board approval. PLSD would provide sewer service for a trailer accommodation to be utilized by crews during the remodel of Station 1.

Division Chief of Logistics Dean Wahl said the trailer will be 14 by 60 feet with three bedrooms, a kitchen, two bathrooms, and two showers, with laundry services and electric heating. The trailer will be connected to PLSD for sewer services. It will be located on the west side of Station 1 and will also be connected for water and electricity. The trailer is scheduled for delivery on April 15, and it will take about 10 days to be fully connected to utility services.

Hildebrandt said that PLSD will not assess a tap fee for the connection to the temporary accommodation.

The board accepted the IGA for the temporary tap service, 7-0.

Wahl announced the Station 1 remodel groundbreaking is scheduled to take place on May 2.

Succession planning

Kovacs said all staff members have completed a survey to help plan for succession. The following results were revealed:

- Most employees expect to remain at TLMFPD for the next 11 years.
- One battalion chief is planning to retire in three years.
- Some division chief positions are expected to be available in about five years.
- Over 40% of the staff expect to remain in the fire service for 20 years.
- It is anticipated that some staff may move to other organizations.

Some internal staff members are interested in moving into leadership roles, and four indicated they would like to be fire chief in the future. During the March snowstorm, two battalion chiefs were given the opportunity to participate in the command center and interact with all agencies to gain experience at the executive level. The district will be planning for succession over the next several years for internal staff to

move into leadership positions.

Fire hydrant location review

Kovacs said that he, Trost, and Division Chief of Community Risk Jamey Bumgarner met with the county Sheriff’s Office dispatch center as one of two departments within the county to beta-test hydrant data software. The review will ensure all district hydrants are correctly reflected in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) map.

Chief’s report

Kovacs said the following:

- TLMFPD made an emergency disaster declaration for COVID-19 in March 2020 and he will be discussing the decision to rescind the declaration with partner agencies and report back to the board next month before making a decision.
- The Emergency Services International (ESCI) 2019 master plan is transitioning into a five-year plan. The goal is to have the plan com-

pleted by the end of the year and begin implementing the plan in January 2022.

- Some policies and procedures that have existed mostly in draft form are now being formalized and published.
- Target Solutions—An online operations management system/file-sharing application for the fire service is now being used to provide photo and video sharing across the organization, giving everyone the opportunity to learn from each incident across all shifts.
- A new local monthly meeting of fire chiefs to include the Colorado Springs Fire Department and the Air Force Academy Fire Department will ensure everyone is supporting each other and resolving regional issues.
- TLMFPD will meet monthly with

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