

Monument Board of Trustees, workshop and regular meeting, May 17

Monument residents may see refunds from town revenue overages

By Allison Robenstein
 Monument residents might see a tax refund next year because the Board of Trustees (BOT) could not agree how a ballot question should be written that would ask voters about revenue retention. During a workshop that preceded the regular May 17 meeting, the board considered converting from a statutory town to a Home Rule one. A survey of residents shows most are happy with the value they receive from town services.

Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott and Trustee Jim Romanello were absent for both the workshop and the meeting. Trustee Jamie Unruh attended the regular meeting but not the workshop.

Excess revenue may come back to residents

The board considered a ballot question that would allow the town to keep and spend excess revenues for a period of five years. According to the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, or TABOR, a vote of the people is required for a municipality to keep excess revenues. TABOR limits revenue from property and sales taxes, town fees, and funds allocated to the town's reserves. Treasurer Rosa Ooms said federal grants are exempt from TABOR restrictions.

Trustee Mitch LaKind asked about the town's intergovernmental agreement with Triv-

iew Metropolitan District that requires the town to give half of its sales tax revenue to the special district. Town Attorney Andrew Richie said sales tax that flows into Triview's accounting system counts against their revenues, not the town's.

The board first discussed the request at the April 15 meeting. Richie said the amount to be retained is based on the previous year's revenues.

The board couldn't agree on the ballot question verbiage. Ultimately the request failed due to lack of a motion.

Town still considering Home Rule

The board is considering a conversion to Home Rule, a function of Colorado's constitution that gives municipalities greater control over local matters, such as election procedures, boards and commissions, zoning, traffic issues, and methods for passing ordinances and resolutions. Local concerns are ultimately decided by a court, but in some instances state statutes supersede local government. Trustee Ron Stephens said it must be abundantly clear that the autonomy of Home Rule doesn't give the town the authority to ignore Colorado statutes.

A charter commission composed of elected town residents would be tasked with creating the new government charter. Richie said the process "gives

citizens the chance to determine how the town will operate." Elected charter commissioners would be given access to town staff and relevant portions of the state constitution.

The process must be initiated during one of the July board meetings to meet the rigorous time schedule. Otherwise, it cannot be included on the November ballot.

The board first discussed Home Rule at the April 15 meeting.

Trustee Laurie Clark suggested offering a refresher course on the state constitution, but Mayor Don Wilson said this

would be out of the board's purview and might influence the commission toward the board's recommendations.

Foreman said there will be town hall meetings to educate the public before the process begins.

No decisions were made, nor was there any further direction given to staff.

Survey shows residents don't see balance of town growth

Magellan Strategies of Louisville completed a survey of town residents. The intent was to understand "Monument residents' thoughts and opinions of town services, programs and budget priorities and quality of life aspects." Just over half the respondents said the town has



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