

ment and the support of voters in the event of a mill levy override ballot initiative.

The Portrait of the Lewis-Palmer Graduate initiative now in development will demonstrate how the district's curriculum and programs lead to future success of its graduates.

Superintendent KC Somers commented that the district recognizes that it's in a competitive landscape in relation to neighboring districts and that he hopes to hear from students and staff about being part of a world-class organization. He said the board, during its recent work session, stressed the concept of listening to students, parents, staff, and the community.

In November, members of the district leadership visited each school to observe classes in session and speak with students and staff. These visits will continue.

#### Demographic update

Shannon Bingham of Western Demographics spoke to the board regarding the state of development in the area and its potential impact on the district in the coming years.

Bingham said that the district has lost some enrollment in the last few years due to COVID-19 and the cost of housing, but the birth rate is increasing significantly and

he anticipates there will be a housing building boom in the next five years with attractive prices for families with children. In addition, interest rates are attractive right now. In the Jackson Creek area, it's anticipated that an additional 350 homes will be built per year for the next five years.

There was a brief discussion of how much the district receives per unit of new construction. District 38 is unusual in that it consists of two towns and unincorporated El Paso County. Bingham said that the average amount received in the state is \$2,000 per unit.

This money can be used to purchase land to build new schools as needed or withdrawn as cash. Bingham stressed that it is important that the district have this funding to draw from.

Somers commented that the district currently receives \$1,300 per unit.

Bingham described the capacity of each school and whether the district could weather the anticipated growth in the area.

Palmer Lake Elementary is short of capacity but it is important that there be a preschool available in the area because young families are showing an interest in the

town. However, the rate of building in the area is slow, Bingham said.

Bear Creek Elementary will exceed its capacity due to the rate of building in the Jackson Creek corridor. Ray Kilmer Elementary will be all right for the next few years with the possible addition of a modular classroom.

The middle school and high schools are all right for now, Bingham said, but as more younger children mature there will be pressure.

Bingham also stated that many of the students at the new Monument Academy secondary school are coming from other districts.

#### Open enrollment policy

The board discussed a change in its open enrollment policy by having a first reading of two existing policies and their updates.

The open enrollment process will now be divided into two phases, one stretching from Jan. 1 through mid-February and the other beginning shortly thereafter. As in the past, preference will be given to students who live in the district and want to attend a school other than their neighborhood school, students from outside the district who have siblings attending D38 schools, and children of dis-

trict staff.

Acceptance is contingent on space available in the requested school.

A detailed description of the procedure for incoming military families is included in the policies.

#### Superintendent's update

Somers reported that analysis of the recent student survey is underway, and a report will come in January.

In response to the need for additional mental health support, a new state initiative called "I Matter" offers three free appointments with a counselor. Seven hundred appointments have been made to take advantage of the program.

The new Financial Advisory Committee has been selected. The 14 members will have their first meeting in January.

The district has been selected to receive a new curriculum and training for literacy up to grade 5.

Fifty members of the district's DECA team have advanced to the state level, and members of the Lewis-Palmer Wind Symphony have been selected to perform for the Colorado Music Educators Association. In addition, six members of the Palmer Ridge High School choir will be in the state choir and five members

will be in the all-city band.

The board recognized American Furniture Warehouse for its support of the district through its school partnership program. The organization has donated over \$21,000 over the past years.

#### Citizens' comments

Three members of the public spoke against the No Place for Hate program featured during last month's board meeting. One objected to the fact that the program creates victim and oppressor mentalities and that it requires participating schools to report any incidents of bias.

Another individual objected that schools are required to reapply for membership in the program each year, that program sponsors (the Anti-Defamation League) teach gender fluidity, and that participation gives power to an outside activist group.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Lewis-Palmer D38 Board of Education meets at 6 p.m. on the third Monday of each month in the district's learning center, 146 N. Jefferson St., Monument. Due to the school closure on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the January meeting will be on Jan. 24.

Harriet Halbig may be reached at [harriethalbig@ocn.me](mailto:harriethalbig@ocn.me).

### Monument Board of Trustees Special Meeting, Dec. 7

## Board approves 2022 budget

By Allison Robenstein

During a special meeting on Dec. 7, the Monument Board of Trustees approved the 2022 budget.

#### 2022 budget approved

After restating the 2021 budget, the following appropriations were approved for 2022, creating a total operating budget of \$42.498 million:

- General Fund, \$ 7.58 million
- Capital Projects Fund, \$ 3.27 million
- Police 2F Fund, \$4.28 million

- 2A Water ASD Fund, \$ 1.73 million
- Community Development Fund, \$167,410
- Traffic Impact Fee Fund, \$100,000
- Storm Drainage Impact Fee Fund, \$100,000
- Water Enterprise Fund, \$ 25.21 million
- Parks Fee Fund, \$0
- Conservation Trust Fund, \$60,000

Trustee Laurie Clark asked about the police fund, wondering in which fund the money would be placed if

the expected \$1.65 million in revenues is exceeded. Town Manager Mike Foreman said all sales taxes generated by 2F would go into that fund.

Mayor Don Wilson commended Foreman for reaching an unreserved fund balance of 14.13%. His goal has been to maintain a balance of 15%, while before he arrived the reserves were almost zero.

In accordance with statute, the property tax mill levy was certified at 5.75%. In 2021, the mill levy was 6.15%

#### Agreement to join Colorado opioid settlement

Madeline VanDenHoek, assistant to the town manager/strategic initiatives, asked the board to approve an opioid settlement memorandum of understanding (MOU). Recent settlements with Purdue Pharma, McKinsey & Co., Johnson & Johnson, AmerisourceBergen, Cardinal Health, and McKesson resulted "in up to approximately \$400 million in settlement funds for both the state and Colorado local governments to abate the opioid crisis."

If 95% of all Colorado counties and municipalities participate, then legal claims may be made. The money would go to the Police Department.

Chief Sean Hemingway said he could use the settlement money for training of officers in overdose response, identifying medical emergencies faster, and replenishing the town's supply of Narcan.

Trustee Darcy Schoening asked the chief to ensure the town follows any specific mandates for spending the money within the MOU.

Trustee Ron Stephens asked if the town police have seen opioid issues here. Hemingway said there have been overdoses and situations in which officers had to administer Norcan, but it isn't always evident on what substance the subject is overdosing.

During public comments, resident Nancy Swearingen said she found it interesting that the board would approve this funding but disapproves of funding that doesn't match their interests. "I expect more from each and every one of you," she said.

The board approved the request unanimously.

#### Workshop to discuss possible future resolutions

Before the special meeting, the entire board met in person to discuss two resolutions related to COVID-19 vaccination mandates and passport requirements. In general, the board agreed to remove any mention of the current pandemic virus. Rather, they suggested the resolution should be broader. Clark said there may be a lot of viruses coming in the future with specific names. She asked that the resolutions emphasize individual health choices overall. She suggested more general verbiage such as, "all mandatory health orders that violate our constitutional rights."

Although both resolutions state, "the COVID vaccine only has Emergency Use Authorization approval from the FDA," several board members noted the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine received full approval by the FDA on Aug. 23, 2021. It's a moot point if any mention of COVID-19 is removed.

One of the two resolutions asks for sanctuary status for the town, but Stephens is against such action. He said the board cannot combat lawlessness with more lawlessness because it results in anarchy. He suggested such a move would be following the communist playbook, which would instill martial law to combat government-created anarchy. Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott was also averse to labeling the town a sanctuary. Schoening disagreed, saying she might still consider some type of sanctuary status, asking for legal advice on the meaning of the word sanctuary. She asked whether it truly equates to an anarchic state. In her research, she found the word simply suggests "We won't cooperate with the federal government on certain issues."

The board decided to have another workshop to continue discussing these resolutions before the next scheduled meeting on Jan. 3 at 5:30 p.m.

The board went into executive session to receive legal advice on the inclusion of the Monument Ice Rinks property at 16240 Old Denver Road into the Triview Metropolitan District. Upon entering back into

Manage Your Account + Monitor Your Energy Use

## Switch & Save

Switch to SmartHub to manage your account and monitor your electric use — all without leaving your home! You'll receive a monthly 50¢ per meter credit. Additional account credits available for bank account auto-pay.\*

To learn more and to make the switch, visit [www.mvea.coop/payment-options](http://www.mvea.coop/payment-options).

\*Promotion subject to change without notice. Restrictions may apply. Monthly credits are dependent upon continued monthly enrollment.



**BONUS! Go Paperless or Bank Account Auto-Pay, Get Automatically Entered Into a Quarterly Drawing for a \$300 Account Credit!**



[www.mvea.coop](http://www.mvea.coop) • (800) 388-9881 • Stay Connected: Like. Follow. Share.

