

### Bill of sale approved

Powell said that 15 minutes after the October meeting it was realized that one document requiring signature was missing. Signing the last bill of sale document was the last action to complete Phase 1 of the merger with Monument Fire District (MFD).

The board approved the final bill of sale, 4-0.

### 2023 meeting dates and timing change

Gunderman proposed the board meet bi-monthly in 2023, at Station 1 (Highway 105), before the MFD board meets on the fourth Wednesday at 4:30 p.m.

The board agreed to the proposed schedule changes.

Popovich said the meeting schedule for 2023 would be approved at the January meet-

ing in accordance with Special District Association rules, and no meeting is scheduled for December 2022.

### Firefighter forum

Driver Luke Owens thanked the board for all its hard work. **Note:** Kovacs updated the board with the district's October activity. For information, see the MFD article on page 14 and visit the website listed below for reports.

The regular meeting adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

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### Volunteer pension board meeting

Trustee Mike Badger, attending via Zoom, presented the allocation report to the board and said:

- The pension fund had taken a beating in the stock market, with every

quarter up until the end of September experiencing a constant loss in overall investments.

- The fund is down about \$185,000 compared to previous years. See [www.ocn.me/v22n5.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n5.htm#dwfpd).
- The volunteer status changed after the district quit accepting volunteers in readiness for the merger with Monument Fire District.
- There are only two volunteers eligible to draw from the fund when they turn 50.
- Another two volunteer members that had five or nine years of service when the volunteer core was dissolved would be eligible to collect from

the fund if they went to another department and completed 20 years of service.

- Wescott would be responsible for paying a pension to those members for the years served with the department.
- The district pays out \$5,816.25 monthly to active retirees, a total of \$69,795 annually.
- A new actuarial study will be performed in 2023. The study is performed in odd years.

Popovich said the election trustees rotate every other year for two-year terms. All the volunteer retirees receiving a pension are sent a letter in October with the option to self-nominate. Incumbent pension board trustee Bill Lowes was

the only person to self-nominate, so the election will be cancelled.

The pension board meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

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Future meetings will precede the Monument Fire District board meeting on the fourth Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Jan. 25 at 4:30 p.m. Meeting attendance is open to the public in person or via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org) or [www.tlm-fire.org](http://www.tlm-fire.org) or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-484-9011.

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## Monument Fire District, Nov. 16

# 2023 budget approved; mill levy match maintains revenue

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Monument Fire District (MFD) meeting on Nov. 16, the board held a public hearing for the proposed 2023 budget, amended the 2022 budget, and adopted the 2023 budget and multiple resolutions. The board also approved an expense reimbursement agreement and received multiple updates.

Secretary Mike Smaldino and Director Jason Buckingham were excused.

### Public hearing on 2022 amended budget

The board opened the public hearing for the 2022 amended budget. Hearing no one speak in favor or opposition, the board closed the hearing, 5-0.

President John Hildebrandt requested the board approve Resolution 2022-10, a resolution summarizing expenditures and revenues for each fund and adopting an amended budget for the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (DBA Monument Fire District) beginning Jan. 1, 2022, and ending Dec. 31, 2022. The board approved the resolution in a roll call vote, 5-0.

**Note:** The budget was adjusted from about \$12.9 million to about \$14.7 million.

### Public hearing on 2023 proposed budget

The board opened the public hearing, no one spoke in favor or opposition and the board closed the hearing, 5-0. See [www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#mfd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#mfd).

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the projected property tax

income for MFD is expected to be about \$10.9 million (\$10.8 million was projected for 2022). The final property tax assessment will not be known until early December. Kovacs noted some of the important features of the 2023 budget as:

- A temporary increase in the mill levy from 18.4 mills to 18.83 mills for 2023 to offset the loss of revenue resulting from the state Legislature lowering the Residential Assessment Rate.
- A cost-of-living allowance increase for employees.
- Hire six new firefighters and a fire technician.
- Fleet and equipment purchases.
- Identify property to build a new Station 3 to replace the existing station on Woodmoor Drive.
- Remodel Stations 2 (Roller Coaster Road), 4 (Gleneagle Drive), and 5 (Highway 83/Stage Coach Road).
- Continue to set aside funds for future capital purchases.

**Note:** The MFD anticipated revenue for 2023 of about \$16.5 million coupled with the DWFPD revenue (about \$3.1 million) for operating services will provide a total projected income of about \$19.6 million (includes Specific Ownership Taxes, ambulance revenue, impact fees, and other miscellaneous revenues).

In a roll call vote, the board approved the following:

- Resolution 2022-07, a res-

olution adopting the 2023 budget and approving each fund's expenditures and revenues.

- Resolution 2022-08, the 2023 budget appropriation of sums of money to various funds.
- Resolution 2022-09, the 2023 property tax levy for the year 2023 to help defray the cost of government for the Monument Fire District 2023 budget year. Increasing the mill levy to 18.83 mills for 2023 to offset the loss of revenue resulting from the temporary reduction of the Residential Assessment Rate.
- The 2023 wage schedule. Vice President Roger Lance recused himself during the wage schedule vote.

The board also approved the 2023 fee schedule and the 2023 Board of Directors meeting schedule, 5-0. See [www.tlmfire.org](http://www.tlmfire.org).

Kovacs informed the board of the DWFPD change in meeting schedule dates and times. See DWFPD article on page 13.

### Financial report

Treasurer Tom Kelly said as of October the district revenue was about \$13.2 million and 102% of the projected 2022 income budget set at about \$12.9 million. Expenses were about \$8.7 million of the projected 2022 expense budget set at about \$10.1 million.

Hildebrandt said the district is receiving a significant amount of revenue from specific ownership taxes and ambulance fees, and revenue looks good for the remainder of the year and into 2023.

The board accepted the treasurer's report as presented, 5-0.

### Expense reimbursement agreement

Kovacs requested the board approve the expense reimbursement agreement with the Town of Monument (TOM) for the water supply connection



**Above:** From left are Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner, Lt. Christopher Keough holding his Firefighter of the Year award, Division Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley, and Fire Chief Andy Kovacs at the Monument Fire District Second Annual Awards Banquet on Nov. 8 at Hearth House in Monument. Keough received the Firefighter of the Year award for 2022, and currently serves the combined district as the officer in charge of fleet and facilities. *Photo courtesy of Monument Fire District.*

for \$127,743.00. See [www.ocn.me/v22n7.htm#tlmfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n7.htm#tlmfpd).

The board approved the agreement, 4-1. Director Tom Tharnish, the TOM Public Works director abstained.

### American Medical Response - update

Kovacs said as the months go by in 2022 the district is receiving fewer calls for assistance from American Medical Response (AMR) and said:

- The district hosted a breakfast meeting with the other county transport agencies to formulate a unified approach to solve the problems. See [www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#mfd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n11.htm#mfd).
- The meeting was productive and the result should rectify some of the challenges the agencies had with AMR.
- In October the district accepted 10 out of the 12 AMR requests, far better than the January accep-

tance rate of 64 requests.

- The Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) operates three squads of ambulances available to AMR and before that resource is depleted, AMR is requesting outside transport agencies to avoid a \$3,000 penalty for not dispatching to calls.
- The meeting resulted in the creation of a shared penalty fee schedule depending on the type of call, and that will begin in December.

### Chief's report

Kovacs said the following:

- At the beginning of October, he and Chief of Operations Jonathan Bradley and Battalion Chief Micah Coyle attended a three-day workshop designed to assist districts seeking accreditation at the Center for Public Safety Excellence Quality

MFD (Cont. on 16)

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