

The combined district will be able to meet response times.

- The Local 4319 will host a free Regional Cancer Seminar at the Great Wolf Lodge on May 13, with national research experts speaking about cancer in relation to fire-fighting.
- Battalion Chief Sean Pearson is nominated to serve on the Pikes Peak Fire Chief's Council, a county/regional committee.

**Apparatus update**

Kovacs said:

- The district has received a new ambulance that is expected to be in service soon after it is certified by El Paso County and fully equipped.
- Both of the combined districts' tower truck engines are back from maintenance and in service.
- A new ladder truck has been ordered for about

\$1.6 million, with an estimated build time of about 19-21 months. The purchase will replace the tower truck at Station 1 (Highway 105). See the TLMFPD article on page 1.

- The district received the 15 Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus ordered in late December for the DWFPD crews, far earlier than the expected March delivery date. See [www.ocn.me/v22n1.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n1.htm#dwfpd).

**Station update**

Kovacs said that Station 4 (formerly DWFPD Station 1) had a catastrophic failure of the bay door cable system that houses the ladder truck, but the firefighters are still able to respond out of the other bays. The district is awaiting an estimate and time frame for the door repair, said Kovacs.

**Safety After the Fact Evaluation reporting**

Bradley said the following:

- TLMFPD began Safety After the Fact Evaluation (SAFE) reporting last year to capture dramatic emergency events with a lot of moving parts and high consequence, such as structure fires, multi-patient EMS events, traffic accidents, violent events, and technical rescues.
- The district can learn from the reports and look for potential failures in the system, highlight positive outcomes, and reinforce good behaviors.
- The district operates on a shift system and the SAFE reporting system allows the whole department to learn from events, even if they are not on the same shift.
- After the initial report is generated by the on-scene incident commander and the shift battalion chief has completed the report, the Division of Training Chief Kris Mola and Bradley include additional information, and the final report is then loaded into the Target Solutions software program for all shifts to read.

**Ice-rescue refresher training**

Chairman Mark Gunderman said he had recently watched both districts during the annual ice-rescue refresher training (see photo on page 1), and it was interesting to see both crews working and training together at Bristlecone Lake, off of Forest Lakes Drive. "It was great to see how the crews get ready and how quickly they can get out onto the lake," said Gunderman.

Kovacs said the TLMFPD 2022 budget set aside funds to purchase boats and equipment to assist with lake rescues during the summer months. In the past, the district has commandeered boats and paddle boards from residents to complete rescues, and that is not appropriate.

Gary Nelson, president of the El Paso County Emergency Incident Support (EIS) volunteer group, said the following:

- EIS typically spends an average of about \$450 per event, and the group is fortunate to receive donations from the community.
- EIS provides hot sandwiches, high energy

snacks, protein drinks, and coffee for emergency responders during incidents and training events.

- The group recently provided support during ice-rescue refresher training at Bristlecone Lake.
- EIS is ecstatic to support first responders in all weather and situations—serving those who serve.

**Note:** EIS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable organization. For information, visit <https://epceis.com>.

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

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Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month at the TMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, at 4 p.m. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for March 15 at 4 p.m. For Zoom meeting joining instructions, agendas, minutes, and updates, visit [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org) or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-488-8680.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at [nataliebarszcz@ocn.me](mailto:nataliebarszcz@ocn.me).

**Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, Feb. 16**  
**Illegal recreational fire concerns addressed**

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BF-FRPD) meeting on Feb. 16, the board heard about illegal recreational fire concerns and the cost for a potential future ladder truck. Also, the board received multiple updates to include comparisons of the district's mill levy with neighboring districts.

Treasurer Jack Hinton was excused.

**Recreational fire concerns addressed**

Chairman Rick Nearhoof said Fire Chief PJ Langmaid had received an angry, threatening letter of complaint from a neighbor living next to a vacation rental property in Black Forest. Nearhoof read the letter that stated a rental property owner had not paid any fines for the numerous illegal fires started by vacation renters over the past

several months. The letter also claimed the Fire Department was not doing its job. After reading the lengthy disparaging letter, Nearhoof read the corresponding letter Langmaid sent to the resident. Nearhoof thanked Langmaid for responding in a professional manner and for explaining the situation carefully to the angry, concerned resident.

Langmaid said the following:

- Although the Fire Department responded to the rental property on multiple occasions to ensure the fires were extinguished, request compliance of burn restrictions by posting signage to inform the renters, the authority to issue a citation and impose fines is currently the direct responsibility and the sole discretion of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office (EPCSO) deputy patrol officer.
- Vacation renters from out of town are typically unaware of the extreme regional fire danger, the dry fuels, and the potential for a large wildland forest fire.
- The EPCSO has since instructed the vacation

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