

The board approved the extension, 4-0.

Chief's report

Dowden read the chief's report as of June 30, as prepared by Langmaid and the executive staff, and said the following:

- The district responded to 16 fire calls and 33 EMS calls, and about 1,430 training hours had been completed in June.
- Notable revenues were \$12,582 for ambulance revenue, \$41,570 for deployments with a total tax revenue of about \$1.084 million (includes property taxes and special owner-

ship taxes).

- The district spent \$250,000 to secure the purchase of the 2005 used Pierce Aerialscope tower ladder truck.
- The district Station Alerting system is aligned with the CSFD template. The project completion date is to be determined.
- The district had conducted 71 wildfire risk property assessments.
- Fire stage warnings will be updated via the district website. For updates, visit www.bffire.org.
- The 2023 budget cycle had begun with company of-

ficers submitting budget requests to the respective section chiefs for review. The budget will be more challenging than in recent years due to the action taken by the state government to lower the Residential Assessment Rate and the predicted recession and rising inflation due to federal policies.

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg said he had responded with a Type 6 (brush truck) engine to assist with a wildland fire in Elbert County, and a type 3 (wildland) engine had deployed to San Angelo,

Texas, to conduct severity patrols (watching and maintaining fire lines).

Dowden said that despite the significant daily operational workload, the leadership within the organization is consistently focused on strategic planning for the next five, 10, and 20 years, to deliver a professional and high-performing service to the community.

Thank you received

Dowden read a note of gratitude from a homeowner, thanking the firefighters for a quick response to an outbuilding fire that occurred on June 14 at a property on Shoup Road.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Meetings are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at Station 1, 11445 Teachout Road, Colorado Springs. Meetings are open to the public in person or via Zoom. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Aug. 17 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, and minutes, visit www.bffire.org or contact Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at admin@bffire.org or call 719-495-4300.

Natalie Barszcz can be reached at nataliebarszcz@ocn.me.

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, July 8 and 27

Local 4319 seeks collective bargaining agreement; districts combine

By Natalie Barszcz

The Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection (TLMFPD) board held a special meeting on July 8 to approve an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for the provision of emergency services to the residents of Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD), and on July 27 the board received a presentation from Monument Professional Firefighters Local 4319 members on a collective bargaining agreement (CBA). The board also held an executive session to receive legal advice regarding a CBA and on setting mill levies.

Director Jason Buckingham left the meeting due to shift commitments on July 27.

Secretary Mike Smaldino and Director Terri Hayes did not attend the July 8 meeting.

Intergovernmental agreement approved

On July 8, the board held a special meeting to approve a full-service IGA for the provision of emergency services for DWFPD and assume the employment of the DWFPD personnel.

In a roll call vote, the board approved the IGA 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Collective bargaining agreement revisited

On July 27, TLMFPD firefighters Tyler Ru-

ona and Christian Schmidt of the Monument Local 4319 International Firefighter Association gave a presentation to the board on collective bargaining agreements. Ruona said:

- Cooperative collective bargaining would be most effective for TLMFPD personnel.
- A CBA would achieve the goal and foster an establishment between both parties, creating an advantageous working relationship,
- The agreement would be more of a give and take, rather than take it or leave it relationship.
- A CBA would create the best means to solving workplace problems and establishing effective communications.

Schmidt said:

- The CBA document will change with discussion, but eventually the district will end up with a mutually beneficial document for the future.
- A CBA is the best and fairest way to capture the progress made over the past 18 months.
- A department with a CBA speaks volumes, and it would be good for firefighter retention.

Schmidt thanked the administration and the board for supporting the firefighters in the past.

President John Hildebrandt said that

should arbitration happen, the final decision would be made by a third party, and the board would have ultimately lost control in the decision-making process. Hildebrandt asked Schmidt and Ruona if it was possible to incorporate everything the firefighters are requesting and maintain a revised Meet and Confer Plus document.

Vice President Roger Lance said that about 10 years ago, the TLMFPD had a dysfunctional board and administrative staff. A CBA would have resolved many issues and accusations when everything was undesirable in terms of how the district was run. It has taken awhile to get the current board and fire chief, and it is understandable that the firefighters are concerned about future staff and board changes.

Fire Chief Andy Kovacs said the Meet

and Confer Plus document had been in place since January 2019 and will expire at the end of 2022. A meeting is scheduled with Local 4319 to discuss continuing the Meet and Confer Plus from Jan. 1, 2023, until all the CBA discussions have taken place and a decision is determined, said Kovacs.

Local 4319 labor law/employment attorney Naomi Perera of The Kelman Buescher Firm P.C., Denver, said:

- Firefighter arbitration is a very rare occurrence, and 2011 was the last case she had handled.
- The neutral third party drives both parties to come to an agreement.
- Colorado has 17 districts with a CBA that includes impasse resolution and binding arbitration, and about four or five are in place without impasse resolutions.



Professional Deck Construction and Upgrades since 1999. Now offering Fence Construction and Repair.

BORDERS DECK & FENCE

Call Shaulin Today! (719) 332-6292
shaulinkr@decksbyborders.com
FREE ESTIMATES

SCHEDULE A TOUR

COMMUNITY
It's more than just Home.
Locally Owned and Managed

Learn More
719-259-0448
16601 Jackson Creek Parkway
Monument, CO 80132
JacksonCreekSeniorLiving.com

Assisted Living | Memory Care | Independent Living