

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Aug. 16

# 2021 audit approved; district boundary realignment discussed

By Natalie Barszcz  
At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection

District (DWFPD) meeting on Aug. 16, the board approved the 2021 audit, heard

about the future district boundary realignment, and received multiple updates regarding the unification process with Monument Fire District (MFD).

Director Mike Forsythe was excused.

### 2021 audit

The board approved the 2021 audit and authorized the auditor to file it with the state, 4-0.

### District boundary realignment

The district's attorney, Emily Powell of Ireland Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm, said that moving forward a two-step process is required, and said:

- Step 1: The board would need to simultaneously increase the district (southern enclave) mill levy and dissolve the district in one election.
- Step 2: A district-to-district transfer would then need to be implemented, moving the district to MFD without an election.
- Everyone in the former DWFPD area of service would receive a decrease in mill levy.
- Each step would take a year to complete, and the legal process will be intensive and involve a district court, and the board will be required to order an election.
- Legal fees for 2023 cannot be projected until the board has decided how to proceed, but the board could wait if they need some breathing room.

President Mark Gunderman said he is glad the board does not need to make an immediate decision, and a discussion regarding the timeline for the process should take place with MFD board President John Hildebrandt and Fire Chief Andy Kovacs.

Powell said she would submit an estimate of attorney fees for the 2023 budget planning process but requested the board consider the 2024 presidential election year.

Gunderman said the district could consider a ballot question for the 2023 election.

After the mill levy tax issue is resolved and the district transfer is completed, the district can be dissolved, said Powell.

### Unification update

Powell gave an update on the status of tasks related to the merger and said:

- The personnel transfer to MFD was scheduled to occur on Aug. 28.
- The former insurance brokers are making sure all programs are transferred on time.
- The administrative staff is ensuring that the staff is transferred on to the MFD payroll and W2 systems.
- The district will need to submit a prorated pension plan for the DWFPD personnel.
- The bill of sale for the apparatus and equipment and the quit claim deeds for Station 4 and 5 (formerly Station 1 and 2) have been drafted and will be sent to Kovacs and the MFD attorney Maureen Juran.
- The board approved a lump sum transfer of \$1.8 million at the July board meeting. The transfer to MFD will be made on Sept. 13. See [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#dwfpd).
- All the glitches have been ironed out, and everything is moving along as expected.

### Chief's report

Kovacs (attending via Zoom) said the following:

- The new combined district name "Monument Fire District" logo and patch artwork was created by Engineer Lou Jones, and the district has received many compliments over the name change and patch.
- The merger is moving along smoothly and MFD appreciates the DWFPD board member support.
- The full-services contract signing and re-dedication of Station 1 was well attended. The district's official honor guard was introduced for the first time at the event, and the district appreciated the support from the volunteer group El Paso County Emergency Incident Support.
- The district participated in the Town of Monument's Fourth of July Parade and personnel assisted in about five or six minor medical issues during the event.
- The district has been hard at work training with area partners and has achieved a higher amount of training hours required of their profession.
- Battalion Chief Sean Pearson and Emergency Medical Services Coordinator Stephanie Soll have been working on a Mass Casualty incident policy. Pearson and Soll put together a simulated car accident with multiple patients at Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection Training Center. The event garnered much attention from local area hospitals, the Regional Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Advisory Councils, and the district medical director. It is good that MFD is leading the charge in the county on developing a regional plan.
- Ambulance fee revenue has increased by 75%, in part due to the combination of the districts.
- Mutual aid calls to assist American Medical Response increased to 25 in July; the district responded to 19.
- The chipping and mitigation events continue in the HOA communities every weekend from May through September. The efforts of Division Chief of Administration/Fire Marshal Jamey Bumgarner are greatly appreciated.

**Note:** The DWFPD board will meet monthly until further notice. The combined district boards receive the same Chief's report. For additional information see the MFD article on page 17.

DWFPD (Cont. on 16)



**Monument Hill Kiwanis Club**  
**Kiwanis Youth Service Leadership Clubs & Tri-Lakes Cares Present**



Photo by Bonnie Nasser



## 2022 Empty Bowls Dinner & Silent Auction

**Proceeds benefit Tri-Lakes Cares!!**

*Please bring a non-perishable food item for the Tri-Lakes Cares Pantry!*

**Wed., Oct. 12, 2022**  
**5:00 - 7:30 pm**

**Lewis-Palmer High School**

**Tickets: \$25 in advance**  
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One child under 12 yrs.  
FREE with each purchased ticket.

Checks payable to:  
**Monument Hill Kiwanis**

**Ticket Includes:**  
Dinner of Soup, Bread, Drink & Dessert  
Handmade Bowl donated by local artist



**Advance Tickets Available Starting Sep 10th**

- **Online** at [www.MHKiwanis.org](http://www.MHKiwanis.org). Click on the bowls photo to purchase tickets
- **Clay N Colors**, Monument
- **Coffee Cup**, Monument
- **Covered Treasures Bookstore**, Monument
- **Hamula Orthodontics**, Monument
- **Rock House Ice Cream & More**, Palmer Lake
- **Serranos Coffee**, Monument
- **Taste of Life**, Monument
- **The Wine Seller**, Palmer Lake
- **Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce**, Monument
- **Tri-Lakes Printing**, Monument

For Information, contact Pete Peterson  
714-271-5947 or  
[EmptyBowlsMHK@gmail.com](mailto:EmptyBowlsMHK@gmail.com)





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