

**DWFPD (Cont. from 14)**

**Public comment**

El Paso County Emergency Incident Support President Gary Nelson said the non-profit group was proud to serve over 140 attendees at the Tri-Lakes Monument

and Donald Wescott merger, re-dedication and ribbon cutting event at Station 1 on July 30. "It was an excellent turnout and presentation," said Nelson. See the MFD article on page 17. The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m. \*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held on the third Tuesday of the month at MFD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105, at 4 p.m. The next regular board meeting is scheduled for Sept. 20 at 4 p.m. Meeting attendance is open to the public in person or via Zoom. For joining instructions, agendas, min-

utes, and updates visit [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org) or [www.tlfire.org](http://www.tlfire.org) or contact Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich at 719-484-9011.

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**Black Forest Fire/Rescue Protection District, Aug. 17**

**New engine arrives in district**

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Black Forest Fire Rescue Protection District (BFFRPD) meeting on Aug. 17, the board explored the recently arrived engine and heard about how the district might fund an approved apparatus purchase in 2023. The board also heard that the district needs to hire additional staff to operate the recently purchased used aerial mid-mount ladder truck.

**Financial report**

Treasurer Jack Hinton said the district had about \$3.396 million in the bank including the emergency funds, but that dropped dramatically in August. The tax revenue received in July was just over \$1 million, and that declined to about \$84,818 in August. The district is now in the cycle of living off the tax revenue received year to date until March 2023, said Hinton.

The district recently purchased a used (to be delivered) Pierce Aerial Ladder Truck for \$250,000 and paid an additional \$79,000 for paint and lights. The Pierce Enforcer Engine down payment was \$275,000 and the Capital Reserve Fund that had held \$565,683 will be reduced to \$211,683. The fund will need to be built back up before the arrival of the 2023 tender apparatus, said Hinton.

Hinton also said the district is using a 10-year lease purchase agreement/loan

to complete the purchase of the 2022 Pierce Enforcer Engine. "It will be a great engine and serve the district for a long time," said Hinton. See [www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n8.htm#bffrpd). The district may also need to finance the 2023 tender next year to afford the training of the 12 personnel needed to operate the used Pierce Aerial Ladder Truck in 2024, said Hinton. See [www.ocn.me/v22n7.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v22n7.htm#bffrpd). The financial report was accepted as presented, 5-0.

**Public comments**

Resident John Tarvainen requested the reason for the recent purchase of a ladder truck.

Fire Chief PJ Langmaid said in response:

- There is no real complement of ground ladders within the entire north end of the county.
- Monument Fire District (formerly Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District) had called for water trucks (tender apparatus) in the past to bring additional ground ladders, and they have a ladder truck.
- The primary purpose of the aerial ladder truck will be to perform search and rescue and ventilation during fire calls, and bring ground ladders.
- The district paid a total of about



Above: From left, Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg, Deputy Chief James Rebitski, Director Kiersten Tarvainen, Vice Chairman Jim Abendschan, Treasurer Jack Hinton, Chairman Nate Dowden, Lt. Brandon Jones, and firefighters Maria Fine and John Singheim pose with the new 2022 Pierce Enforcer Engine. Photo by Natalie Barszcz.

\$329,000 for the used mid-mount aerial ladder truck and a similar new model would have cost about \$1.5 million to \$1.8 million.

- It is a big undertaking and commitment, and the goal was for the district to purchase a ladder truck for 2024, but after the suggestion from a community resident, the executive staff searched for a used ladder truck and found a suitable compromise to meet the district's needs.
- The district will take possession of the truck prematurely, and then buy equipment and hire and train additional staff to operate the truck in 2024.

**Chief's report**

Langmaid said the district is expecting the estimated property tax valuations from the El Paso County Assessor at the end of the month, and due to the state reduction in the Residential Assessment Rate (RAR) and the exclusion of property from the dual service area, budget revenue will be impacted. The district will be consulting legal counsel regarding an adjustment to offset the decrease in the RAR. The adjustment will be more work for the county assessor, said Langmaid. See [www.ocn.me/v21n11.htm#bffrpd](http://www.ocn.me/v21n11.htm#bffrpd).

**Logistic/administrative update**

Deputy Chief James Rebitski said the following:

- Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn hired Brooke Reid, a part-time administrative assistant, on Aug. 1.
- Fleet repairs are being completed at Station 1 by Gavin Smith, retired from South Metro Fire District last October. He had been working one

day a week until recently and will be working three days a week.

- The barn at Station 1 is undergoing a conversion to a ground support/fleet workshop.
- The plan is to install heaters in the barn, which is expected to be completed before winter. Smith will continue to work in the bay at Station 1 until the barn is ready.
- The district website is undergoing a remodel, making fire restriction information easier to find. See [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org).
- Highly visible fire danger signs have been installed around the district.

**Operations/training update**

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg said the following:

- The district staff completed 1,344 training hours in July, 624 hours above the department minimum of 720 hours.
- The department responded to five fire calls and 37 EMS calls in July.
- The district hosted a Forceable Entry class with 30 statewide attendees.
- Wildland Fire Chainsaw certifications were completed, felling dead pine trees in Fox Run Regional Park and a few from behind Station 1.
- The Black Forest Training Center received great feedback from Falcon Fire Protection District and MFD after both districts completed multi-vehicle crash drills.
- An out-building fire occurred at a Black Forest hydroponic farm, due to a light used to keep chickens warm.
- The district responded to assist with a wildland fire in Elbert County.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

**Correction**

Deputy Chief of Operations Chris Piepenburg was traveling during the July meeting and attended via Zoom. Acting Lt. Michael Alverado facilitated the Zoom operation of the meeting. There were no other members of the executive team in attendance.

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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 Sept. 21 at 7 p.m. For joining instructions, updates, agendas, and minutes, visit [www.bffire.org](http://www.bffire.org) or contact Administrative Officer Rachel Dunn at [admin@bffire.org](mailto:admin@bffire.org) or call 719-495-4300.

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