

received no comments prior to the meeting and an announcement had been made in the Gazette. He closed the public meeting and requested the board approve the 2024 budget, Resolution 2023-08 with the exception of section 4 (the adoption and certification of the mill levy).

The board approved the 2024 budget, 3-0.

The board expects to hold a "special meeting" in early January via Zoom to certify the mill levy for 2024.

Subdistrict dissolution and merger completion process

Gunderman said the board will have a large amount of administrative work for the attorneys of both districts, and he suggested the board meet monthly in 2024 through May and then revert to every other month in July through November if necessary.

The board approved the amended schedule, 3-0.

Staff and public recognition

Gunderman said the DWFPD ballot measure 6A and 6B passed as the final hurdle before formalizing the unification between the two districts and completing the merger process. He thanked the Local 4319 for the unanimous decision to pledge \$10,000 in funding for banners and mailings that allowed the district to get the important message out in an effective manner. It was a team effort led by Lt. Roger Lance Jr., with Corey Trotter, Justin Myers, Justin Chavez, and Rachel Peters canvassing neighborhoods, even on days off shift to engage in the successful education campaign. Gunderman thanked Kovacs for arranging meetings with all of the firefighters on every shift, and he thanked the firefighters for getting the word out in a team effort. District Administrator Jennifer Martin was the unsung hero, completing many extra tasks toward complet-

ing the merger. He also thanked the MFD Board of Directors for taking a leap of faith and allowing the Wescott board to wait an extra year to show the residents how well the merger was working, allowing for the education campaign to pass the ballot measures.

Martin thanked Gunderman and his mother, Mary Gunderman, for their hard work campaigning in the community.

Gunderman said his mother really did promulgate the cause and there was no one she ran into that did not receive a flyer.

Lance said it was easy to think about the campaign in the short term over the past two months, but the discussions began as early as 2010 around the coffee table. He thanked the boards and the executive staff for all the heavy lifting and making the merger happen. Achieving the merger will be the highpoint of his career, he said.

Gunderman said the board was a good team, but unfortunately Secretary Larry Schwarz was moving out of state and would not remain on the board. He appreciated Schwarz's perspective as a retired battalion chief, and he was a big piece of the merger process. The board came together to make everything seamless, he said.

Recognition award

Gunderman thanked Lance for the special education campaign and said that before he had become a board member, Lance had been part of the committee helping to pass the mill levy increase in 2017, from 7 mills to 21.9 mills. The huge increase was needed to keep the district operational, and it passed by a two-thirds majority vote. Once again, Lance stepped up to educate the community in 2023 to lead an education campaign because the board and executive staff were not legally allowed to campaign. He de-



Above: From left, President Mark Gunderman presents a plaque of recognition from the Donald Wescott Board of Directors to Lt. Roger Lance Jr. for his commitment and dedication to the community, through the passage of ballot measure 6A and 6B and his leadership that facilitated the creation of Monument Fire District. Gunderman said Lance had gone above and beyond in service to the community, even educating HOA members on a day off at 8 p.m. Photo by Natalie Barszcz.

veloped a strategy in a short time to educate the firefighters and the public, disseminate flyers, information and banners (a couple of which were vandalized in the beginning). Lance hit the mark when it was important to let the voters know early, and without his efforts the ballot measures may not have passed. Gunderman presented Lance with a plaque for his efforts; see photo.

Kovacs said the other L4319 members would be formally recognized at another time.

Board vacancy

Gunderman said he appreciated Schwarz as a board member and his retired battalion chief perspective, and everything the board had achieved under the direction of Kovacs, but as of end of November Schwarz would no longer be a resident within the district. He suggested the board appoint a new secretary and asked Director Charles Fleece to step in and take over the duties of board secretary.

Ferguson said that filling the seat would be unnecessary, although the county could fill the position after 60 days, but that does not usually occur. She requested the board take action and request a formal letter of resignation from Schwarz.

Facilities update

Kovacs said the remodel of Station 5 (Highway 105 "Shamrock Station") was well underway and was expected to be completed in January 2024. The remodel of Station 4 (Gleneagle Drive) will begin after Station 5 is completed. The Station 4 staff will be accommodated at Station 5 during the six-to-seven-month closure of Station 4, he said.

Financial reports

Kovacs said some of the numbers on the January-September profit and loss statement in the September financial report were negative. Those numbers were due to some accounting errors but the CPA made the corrections for the October financial report.

The board approved the financial reports for September and October, 3-0.

For more updates see the MFD article on page 11 and visit www.monumentfire.org.

The meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Volunteer firefighter pension fund Board of Trustees meeting
Trustees Michael Badger and Dennis Feltz attended the volunteer firefighter pension fund meeting via Zoom.

The board approved the financial reports for September and October.

Allocation report and pension fund status

Badger said he had not had the opportunity to get online during his travels to access the spreadsheets for the Board of Trustees' volunteer pension fund, and he was transfer-

ring information to a new computer, but the fund is no longer running in the red. No specific numbers were available for the allocation report, but the third-quarter report for 2023 reveals the fund is not stellar but doing well enough to give him a sigh of relief compared to 2022 and early 2023, he said.

Gunderman said as long as it is in the black and looking solid and the district is no longer adding any more firefighters to the volunteer firefighter pension fund, it should be okay.

2022 actuarial report

Badger said he had not reviewed the 2022 actuarial report, but Martin had along with the trustees and board members. The report was based on no additional funding or changes in the status and is fully funded at 114%, and he was relieved after some of the doom and gloom of the recommended contributions in 2022.

Gunderman said the district is now under no obligation to make any changes.

Martin said it was great news for the district.

Kovacs said district attorney Powell recommended no additional funding going into 2024.

Gunderman said he agreed that no contribution would be added to the volunteer pension fund in 2023, and he agreed to leave the fund as is, in line with Powell's and Kovacs' recommendation. At some point in 2024, the management of the fund will be passed to the MFD Board of Directors on completion of the merger and the Wescott district is dissolved, he said.

Treasurer Duane Garrett said the fund should have longevity now that no other volunteers will be added to the fund.

Gunderman said he did not have an exact date, but definitely by the end of 2024, and maybe by November, MFD could be managing the fund.

Ferguson said the trustees will continue on and sit with the MFD board after the merger is completed.

Note: Board of Trustees meetings are scheduled to be held in May and November 2024 at 4 p.m., before the regular DWFPD Board of Directors meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month. For details, visit www.monumentfire.org.

The board approved the 2024 Board of Trustees meeting schedule for 2024, 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Correction

In the November edition, the cost for the Station 4 air duct cleaning completed by Steamatic was \$3,243. OCN regrets the error.

Meetings are scheduled to be held every month through May 2024 on

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