

Board member Karen Hoida said the Governance Committee supports this proposal.

The MA School Board meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

The board will hold a special meeting on Thursday, April 4 with the executive director finalists. The next

regular board meeting will be on Thursday, April 11, at 6:30 p.m. at the East Campus. See more information at see

https://bit.ly/ma-boe.
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Monument Town Council, March 4 and 18

Council reviews redistricting, infrastructure, and parks

By Chris Jeub

The Monument Town Council covered various topics in March, including discussions on Monument redistricting, infrastructure development along Jackson Creek Parkway, and Higby Road's classification. The council approved a daytime park at Falcon Commerce Center and addressed water delivery costs and the ongoing debate between the Loop Renewable Water Project and the Northern Delivery System (NDS). Updates were provided on the building moratorium and an inquiry into raising traffic impact fees.

Monument redistricting
Discussions revolved around the presentation of findings and options regarding residential district boundaries by the council's District Advisory Commission. Points included the existence of two residential districts and the necessity to enact changes 180 days before the upcoming election, as outlined in Ordinance No. 25-2023. Emphasizing principles such as one-person-one-vote, racial equality, compactness, contiguity, and preservation of communities of interest, the commission examined census data revealing a population imbalance between District 1 and District 2 in Monument, prompting a proposed redistricting plan.

With District 1 currently housing 4,648 people (56%) and District 2 accommodating 5,891 people (44%), projections indicate a significant population increase to 14,100 by November 2024. The suggested redistricting adjustments aim to balance population distribution, with District 1 proposed at 7,236 and District 2 at 7,131, representing a remarkably close 0.7% difference. Town Attorney Bob Cole noted the rarity of achieving such proximity in redistricting projects.

Jackson Creek Parkway
Jeremiah Reichert from Public Works led a discussion on the construction timelines for Highway 105 and Jackson Creek Parkway. He explained the complex mix of stakeholders including Classic Homes, the Town of Monument, El Paso County, and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). Reichert emphasized the necessity of infrastructure improvement along the corridor, highlighting the shared burden among the involved parties. Concerns were raised about future maintenance, particularly regarding the widening of Highway 105 encroaching into CDOT's right-of-way, prompting worries about the town's capacity to manage such responsibilities. Mayor Mitch LaKind pondered the

potential scenario of CDOT shifting maintenance costs to the town. Classic Homes contributed to the discussion by addressing the complexity of the project, including the presence of utilities in the area, and projected an additional eight months for the completion of the development.

Higby Road

Reichert also presented a Higby Road report. It was concluded from an engineering study that Higby qualifies as a major collector street, necessitating additional buildouts. However, discussions ensued regarding the width of Higby, with LaKind expressing concerns about its capacity given the numerous proposed developments in the area. Reichert clarified that the report focused on engineering aspects rather than development specifics, emphasizing comparisons with other thoroughfares like Baptist Road and Highway 105. Councilmember Steve King expressed concerns about potential hazards near the high school and the ongoing debate about right-of-way concessions. Despite differing opinions on challenging county decisions and the costs involved, it was acknowledged that Higby's classification as a major collector street had been confirmed. Plans were outlined

to further refine decisions regarding Higby Road's future by the end of 2024.

Daytime park approved

Ordinance No. 06-2024, concerning the approval of a final Planned Unit Development for Falcon Commerce Center Phase 2 Park, passed unanimously. Situated near South Baptist Road and I-25, staff confirmed that all criteria were met, with previous zoning and sketch plan approvals in 2022. The park, spanning 1.911 acres and intended for daytime use, aims to connect with the current Santa Fe Trail. Concerns were raised by Councilmember Kenneth Kimple regarding potential issues with traffic, lighting, and transient individuals utilizing the park for overnight stays. King, however, expressed support for the project, highlighting the value of allocating land for park use rather than industrial purposes, earning his endorsement with "two thumbs up."

Monument water

Earlier in the year, the council requested Public Utilities Director Thomas Tharnish to present on the cost of water delivery to Monument customers, a request made following council concerns between the Loop and the NDS. Key figures were discussed, including the cost of water delivery at \$10.49 per

1,000 gallons and the prevalence of three-fourths-inch-size meters supplying 90% of residential water services. Tharnish emphasized that there are additional costs to consider beyond the base delivery cost.

LaKind raised concerns about divergent cost figures between the Loop and NDS, prompting discussions about the longstanding debate between the two entities. Councilmembers expressed interest in resolving this issue and potentially aligning with one of the entities, with Councilmember Marco Fiorito highlighting the historical connection between NDS and the town. Councilmember Jim Romanello, however, urged the entire council to invite representatives from both the Loop and NDS for fair representation, a suggestion met with general agreement from all present.

After public comment, the discussion on water continued, with Kimple advocating for a timely decision due to upcoming decisions later. LaKind sought an update soon, with Town Manager Mike Foreman suggesting a meeting in the second half of May with representatives from the Loop, NDS, and Triview present. King expressed skepticism about the data provided by the Loop, while Councilmember Kronick emphasized the importance of making the right decision rather than feeling pressured.

Moratorium update

During public comment, concerns were raised regarding the building moratorium, with neighboring resident David Brewer expressing his desire for assistance from the Town Council in pursuing his American Dream of subdividing his 1,200-square-foot field. Brewer questioned the duration of the moratorium, as his request should necessitate only a short amount of the town's time. Foreman provided an update on the moratorium, stating that the town currently has under 20 active cases and has identified a candidate for the planning director position, with background checks underway. Foreman anticipated providing a further update in mid-April regarding when the moratorium might be lifted.

Traffic impact fees

Councilmember King highlighted the disparity between Monument's traffic impact fees, set at \$700 per dwelling unit, and those of other communities, which can reach several thousand dollars. King emphasized the principle that development should bear its own costs, particularly considering the current state of road infrastructure lagging the needs of Monument's residents. Foreman noted that the staff is assessing these fees and preparing a report to present to the council. LaKind expressed a desire to address this issue before the moratorium is lifted, indicating a sense of urgency in resolving the matter.

The Monument Council usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next meetings are



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