

short-term while they refinanced to do the buildout, but that had not happened. Though he understands it's a lot of money, even when MA breaks ground it would take 12-18 months to complete construction.

Gustafson said his goal was to cut a check in the first week of July so that MA would have no lease payments in FY24-25. The board unanimously approved the purchase of modulars.

Major Gifts and Corporate Sponsorships program

Executive Director Collin Vinchattle said he received a lot of feedback that the MA community would like to expand facilities, high school programs, and electives. He and Gustafson are working with the administration on a five-year capital improvement plan. He said that bond refinancing would not be able to cover all projects.

Vinchattle requested the board consider a donation coordinator position to focus on large gifts to MA. This person would reach out to donors, keep legacy donations moving forward, and possibly run a capital campaign. He noted that MA could consider different compensation structures from a percentage to a base salary plus percentage and the position could be evaluated semi-annually. He said things to consider include the initial cost, role

clarification, definition of a major gift, and end goals.

Graham asked Vinchattle and Gustafson to explore this and bring back a proposal. He expressed appreciation for Operations Manager Jake Dicus and all he has done over the years and appreciates that these two roles would work collaboratively. Vinchattle said he would touch base with each board member to gather their input.

Highlights

Board meeting highlights include:

- Carle and the entire board recognized outgoing interim Executive Director Kim McClelland. Carle presented McClelland with a certificate and gift. McClelland thanked the board for the opportunity to serve in her own backyard.
- Vinchattle reported on the excitement of the first graduation from Monument Academy's East Campus, which included 21 high school students. He noted that it was a beautiful day on the school's front lawn, with speeches by Graham and valedictorian Scott Kohlhasse.
- Vinchattle reported that the secondary school administrative team was in place with Angela Duca as principal and Jessie Davis as assistant principal.

- The board approved changes to Policy 1500B Executive Director to update the position title, noting it would not be renumbering the policy. It also approved Policy 1500C Chief Financial Officer, removing the information on procurement, which has been moved to a separate policy.
- Finance Director Laura Polen presented the April financials, highlighting three streams of revenue that are still outstanding. She reviewed expenses and revenues highlighting the general fund, bond repayment funds for each campus, and the student activity fund.
- Graham confirmed that construction on Highway 105 and around the West Campus should be completed by the time school starts in August. However, construction on Highway 105 itself will continue.
- The board unanimously approved a resolution to change the authorized signatures for its ColoTrust account to add Polen. It also approved signature authorizations for its Integrity Bank accounts to add Polen and Business Manager Diane Smith.
- The board unanimously approved a contract with Gustafson as interim CFO for fiscal year 24-25.

- The board unanimously approved a contract with the Monument Police Department for school resource officers with a small price increase and other changes to reflect the makeup of each campus.
- Vinchattle asked to delay the vote on the MA/D38 contract until the July board meeting to give him more time to review the contract since he was new in his position. The board agreed to wait for the vote.
- The board voted unanimously to approve a contract with All Copiers, its current company, upon the recommendation of Dicus based on the negotiated cost per copy and the relationship established with the company.
- The MA board will hold a retreat on July 12 at 9 a.m. in the Platinum Group conference room.

The MA School Board meets at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. The next regular board meeting will be on Thursday, July 11, at 6:30 p.m. at the East Campus. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/ma-boe>.

Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, June 26

Merger process prompts final transfers; 2023 audit unmodified

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) meeting on June 26, the board received an update on the merger process with Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District dba Monument Fire District (MFD), held a public hearing, approved an exclu-

sion of real property, and approved the transfer of a fire station, the Volunteer Firefighter Pension Fund (VFPP) plan, and a substantial fund balance to MFD. The board received and approved the presentation of the 2023 audit. The VFPP Board of Trustees held a meeting before the regular meeting.

District merger final transfer actions

Emily Powell of Ireland Stapleton Pryor Pascoe PC law firm, the district's attorney, said the June and July district meetings are down to the final transfer actions. The following transfers were requested:

- The VFPP be transferred to MFD for administration effective Aug. 1.
- A substantial fund balance to MFD.
- The Sun Hills Station (formerly DWFPD Station 3) serving two nonprofit emergency services and additional storage for MFD.
- The exclusion of real property belonging to the two remaining board members. See www.ocn.me/v24n5.htm#dwfpd.

Powell recommended Wescott retain a fund balance of \$65,000 to cover its attorney fees, and the District Court will act on the requests. The merger process is down to the end, she said.

President Charles Fleece asked if the retained sum would be enough in the event that any damage occurs at the Sun Hills property.

Powell said, after discussing the sum with Fire Chief Andy Kovacs, the anticipated \$46,000 was bumped to \$65,000 through the end of 2024, and MFD agrees to pay any outstanding bills.

District Administrative Officer Jennifer Martin said MFD pays the utility bills for the Sun Hills property.

Powell said the reason the two properties remain in the district is to allow the remaining board directors to continue dissolving the district. All of the other properties in the Wescott district were transferred in April onto the El Paso County Assessor's books to be assessed under MFD for fire service and EMS beginning Jan. 1, 2025. The paperwork will be signed to transfer the two remaining properties before the end of 2024, said Powell.

Public hearing and approval

Powell opened a public hearing on the proposed exclusion of real property from the district and said the public hearing had been duly published as required by law. Upon hearing no public comments, the hearing was closed. The board was asked to approve the following:

- The exclusion of real property, Resolution 24-04 approving the exclusion of the two remaining real properties belonging to the remaining board members. See www.ocn.me/v24n5.htm#dwfpd.
 - The quit claim deed transferring the Sun Hills Fire Station to MFD.
 - Joint assignment of the VFPP plan and joint letter authorizing direction on the plan.
 - A letter authorizing the Firefighters Police Pension Association (FPPA) requesting the transfer of the VFPP plan to MFD as the sponsoring employer.
 - The fund balance transfer to MFD.
- The board unanimously approved and signed the resolutions and legal docu-

mentation for the requests.

2023 audit

Mitchell Downs of Erikson Brown and Kloster said the firm is now part of CBIZ. The decision was made by the partners to secure the staff due to a nationwide shortage of accountants. Downs presented the 2023 audit and said the district had five adjustments that occurred due to tweaking financial statements, one was requested by district staff and the other entries related to the VFPP. Most of the disclosures were also related to the VFPE. There was not a lot of activity, but nevertheless everything was focused on and tested. The district 2023 audit received a clean or unmodified opinion and will be electronically uploaded to the state portal. The district budget required significantly less work due to limited activity and cost less than the budgeted \$16,000. The audit was completed with cross-referencing the MFD audit and available a month ahead of last year's audit, said Downs.

The board approved the 2023 audit as presented.

Note: For more information, see the MFD article on page 14 and visit www.monumentfire.org.

The regular meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Volunteer Firefighter Pension Fund Board of Trustees meeting

Volunteer Firefighter Pension Fund Trustee Mike Badger requested the trustee status in regard to voting during meetings.

Powell confirmed the volunteer trustees are voting members of the board, and that in the past there had been a misuse of terms before her time reviewing the minutes. The trustee board members are the five board members and the two volunteers elected from among the membership, and at the next meeting when the VFPP will be managed by the MFD board the trustees will be seven members and the two volunteers elected.

The board approved the November minutes as published, 3-0. Treasurer/Secretary Mike Forsythe joined the meeting after the vote.

Allocation report

Kovacs requested the board review the allocation report and said no action was necessary.

Pension Fund status

Badger said the allocation spreadsheet was developed years ago to track the data from FPPA and the status of the VFPE. At the beginning of 2023, the fund began with \$907,397 and ended the year with \$914,896, just shy of a \$7,500 increase after all payouts and fees were made. The fund always increased until the downturn and at one point the fund was down by about \$150,000, but it is making a comeback. At the end of the first quarter of 2024, the fund had \$930,000 and realized a gain of \$15,134. The second-quarter figures will be made available at the Nov. 13 meeting.

DWFPD (Cont. on 14)

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