

shorthanded, it might make sense to find someone to help Smith. Stern pointed out that Moseley intended to replace Smith, not get him help. Romero said sometimes the board's expectations were "a little unrealistic" but asked the board to follow the process with SGR.

Resident Bill McDonald asked the board if a trustee with pending lawsuits against the town, that is, Moseley, should be allowed to vote on any of the town's business. Several in the audience answered "No!" Moseley responded that he could vote because he had no "pecuniary interest in either lawsuit." Stern said he had asked the town's previous attorney, Scot Krob, if Moseley could vote, and Krob said he could

but might have to recuse himself on some matters.

After some additional, equally heated discussion, the board directed Romero to restart the search.

Progress on permanent town attorney
At the Feb. 12 meeting, Smith, who has been managing the search for a town attorney to replace Krob, told the board that trying to find an interim and a permanent attorney at the same time was confusing potential candidates, and staff recommended abandoning the search for an attorney to serve on a temporary basis. He recommended extending the window to apply to Feb. 20 and holding a workshop to interview candidates. He said he had not found anyone willing to do the job on an interim basis.

Harris and Moseley asked Smith to name the law firms interested in serving the town on a permanent basis; Smith refused, saying making the names public was not in the best interest of the Request for Proposal (RFP) process because board members had contacted the firms, which biased the impartiality of the process. Harris said she felt the staff was not following the board's direction.

Beltran moved to extend the RFP application deadline to Feb. 20, to bring information about all applicants to the Feb. 26 board meeting, and to end the search for an interim attorney. The motion passed with Beeson, Beltran, Jurka and Marble voting yes and Harris and Moseley voting no.

At the Feb. 26 meeting, Smith brought the board the names of three law firms willing to represent the town: Zuckerman Legal, JVAM PLLC, and Wyatt Hamilton Findlay. Smith said staff was reviewing their applications and would give the board recommendations five days before the board's next meeting on March 12, so trustees would have time to review. Smith also suggested a workshop at 4:30 p.m. before the March 12 board meeting, at which the firms would present to the board.

Jurka made a motion to hold a special meeting on March 3 to interview the firms and select a finalist, but there was no second, and he withdrew the motion.

Romero pointed out that an attorney serves as a buffer between staff and the board when personnel issues arise.

The board directed staff to proceed with arranging a workshop with the law firms on March 12 and a vote to select a firm at the board meeting on the same date. Jurka and Moseley objected; Beeson, Beltran, Harris, Marble, and Stern agreed.

Concerns about checks resolved
In her report on Feb. 26, Romero answered questions about checks raised by Jurka and Moseley at the Feb. 12 meeting. She said a set of 21 voided checks that Moseley inquired



Above: At the Feb. 24 meeting of the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees, the board unanimously approved Resolution 16-2026 to appoint DéNaje Ferguson to the Parks and Trails Commission for a two-year term. Commission members may enlist volunteer work groups to assist in developing and maintaining public areas of the town, including parks, trails, and green space. Ferguson was unanimously recommended for appointment by the current members of the Parks Commission. He said he was interested in making the parks more amenable to young adults. Town Clerk Erica Romero administered the oath of office to Ferguson. From left are Romero and Ferguson. *Photo by Jackie Burhans*

about resulted from a printer error. Her research showed a check written to Buc-ee's was a refund for overpayment by Buc-ee's. She also noted that two additional checks had been written to the town's IT provider to cover compliance-related work that fell outside the boundaries of that provider's typical monthly service.

Ferguson appointed to Parks and Trails
Ferguson accepted an appointment to the Parks and Trails Commission at the Feb. 26 meeting.

Executive session

The Feb. 26 meeting was preceded by an executive session for the board to receive legal advice about Roger Moseley v. Town of Palmer Lake. No action was taken following the executive session, but Stern mentioned in the regular board meeting that the lawsuit asked the court to make a preliminary injunction to remove him as mayor and to invalidate board actions taken since his appointment in June. Stern said the court ruled that it would not make that injunction.

The next regular board meetings are scheduled for March 12 and 26. See the town's website at www.townofpalmerlake.com to confirm times and dates of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at the Town Hall. Information: 719-481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me. Jackie Burhans can be reached at jackieburhans@ocn.me.

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MONUMENT PC (Cont. from 1)

The development, approved by the Monument Town Council in December 2025, includes single-family detached homes. Other parts of the broader Conexus development have plans for high-density residential and commercial development. The site includes plans for trail connections for the Santa Fe Regional Trail and is adjacent to a newly realigned section of Old Denver Road. Construction is referred to in town planning documents as Lot 1, Conexus Filing No. 2, and it is expected to break ground with completion targets starting in 2027.

Mark Foster of Hillpointe LLC explained that the project targets the "missing middle" group of essential workers who earn between 80% and 120% of the average median income. The goal of the development is to provide attainable housing that "allows residents to establish themselves in the community and save for future homeownership." These are two-bedroom apartment units with somewhat larger townhomes. Andrea Barlow of N.E.S. provided a timeline of the property, noting it was originally zoned for industrial use in 1981. She highlighted that the current plan resulted from extensive collaboration with the "Save Monument" community group to create a balanced mix of uses that neighbors could support.

Old Denver Road realignment progresses

Eric Chekal of Schuck-Chapman reported on the construction of the "New Denver Road." Utilities are nearly complete, and curb and gutter work is slated to begin in March, with paving expected in late spring. To minimize disruption, major intersection work is being scheduled for after the school year ends.

Density and height reductions

The proposed development for Lot One includes 354 units, which is fewer than the 399 units permitted by the master plan. While a

building height of 75 feet is allowed, the applicant is proposing a maximum height of about 41.5 feet for the apartments to maintain a more appropriate scale.

The "Missing Middle" vs. Industrial Reality

The hearing then centered on the "Missing Middle"—housing for those earning 80% to 120% of the Area Median Income (\$90k for a family of four). Mark Foster, vice president of Development at Hillpointe, emphasized his point that these non-subsidized rentals would allow families to save \$25,000 a year compared to the high cost of local homeownership.

However, the debate shifted from the math to the lifestyle when discussing the units facing Old Denver Road. The developer presented a vision of a "front porch" design with no gates or barriers, intended to connect residents to the community and local traditions like the Fourth of July parade. Commissioner Baumer challenged this "open" concept, citing concerns over industrial growth and increased traffic. She emphasized that as the nearby industrial complex expands, residents will likely want a barrier between their private lives and the encroaching commercial activity, regardless of the 25mph speed limit.

Renewable water strategy served by Triview

In response to commissioners' questions, the developers clarified that the project will be served by Triview Water and Sanitation District. The district utilizes the Northern Delivery System, meaning the project will be supported by a renewable water source rather than relying solely on groundwater.

School capacity impacts

The commission discussed potential impacts on School District 38. Foster noted that multi-family units typically generate fewer students than single-family homes and that the district generally prefers "fees in lieu of land" because