



Above: Artist's rendering of the exterior and interior of the proposed Performing Arts Center. *Courtesy of Monument Academy.*

school academic wing.

Executive Director Collin Vinchattle recognized the Lundeen family and Lis Richard, who has a long history with MA. He noted that next year is MA's 30th year. Vinchattle was emotional as he announced this gift that he said would slingshot the MA Legacy in Motion capital campaign to build out the East Campus with an athletic field, an academic wing, and a gymnasium, as well as the Performing Arts Center.

Board President Ryan Graham announced via the MA Facebook page that due to the unbelievable generosity of anonymous donors, MA had re-

ceived a \$17 million gift to build a 750-seat Performing Arts Center at its East Campus. That kind of generosity changes lives and creates a legacy, he said. He expressed his gratitude and asked the community to partner with MA in raising funds to complete its track and field to match the theater that will be built.

This \$17 million gift is the largest publicly recorded private donation to a K-12 Colorado public school; the previous record was \$6 million. Students spoke about the impact of both the arts education program and the athletic programs, which, they said, fostered a growth mindset and

built character through discipline, humility, and resilience.

MA announced that it is ready to break ground on a new track and field facility as soon as the final permit is received. The event finished with a finale by the school choir performing *Walking on Sunshine* and *Mr. Blue Sky*.

Note: More information on MA's capital campaign can be found at <https://www.monumentacademy.net/legacy-in-motion/>.

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Monument Town Council, March 2 and 16

Water tank site annexation approved

By Marlene Brown

On March 16, the Monument Town Council considered Resolution no.17-2026, setting forth "findings of fact and conclusions" regarding the property known as the Town of Monument Beacon Lite Road Water Tank. Dan Ungerleider, director of the Planning Department, explained the timeline and process of the annexation of the Water Tank Site. All findings and conclusions had been completed. The findings passed unanimously, 7-0. Then Ungerleider requested approval of Ordinance no. 04-2026 annexing the site, which passed unanimously, 7-0.

At its regular meeting March 2, the council heard from Terri Hayes, president and CEO of the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce, who explained the services provided by the Chamber. She explained the different events it helps organize to bring the town together and invite more tourism for downtown merchants. It works with business owners in economic development, including finding a space that fits their needs, helping them to expand their business, and finding quality employees.

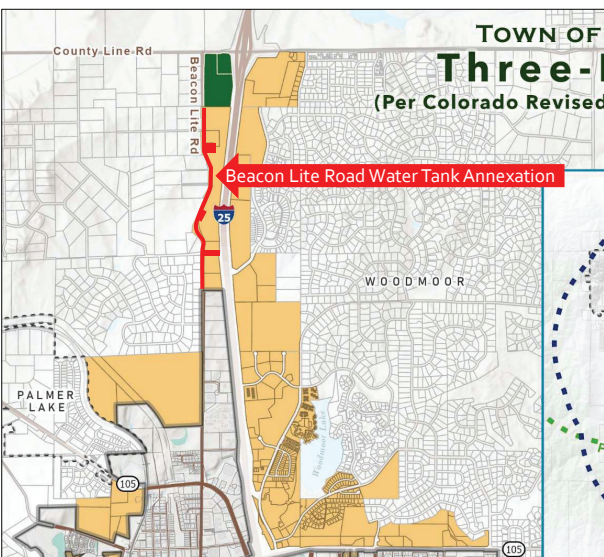
Hayes is chair of several committees and councils that work within other communities and build relationships with other towns in the area. She is involved with the Planning Department and attends pre-planning meetings with businesses that are looking to come to the area. She explained that there are many other things that the Chamber does to help the Town of Monument every day.

Rename the Road contest

Senior Planner Jenna Gorney announced a contest to rename a segment Old Denver Road (previously named Old Denver Highway) that is now being called Crossfield Road, between Santa Fe Avenue and Wagon Gap Trail. The contest started on March 9. After the contest closes, three names will be chosen, and the Town Council will vote on the name at the April 20 regular council meeting. For more information, rules of the contest and how to enter online, go to www.townofmonument.org/691/Rename-the-Road.

Commissioner Bill Wysong of the El Paso Board of County Commissioners and a representative to the Fountain Creek Watershed District (FCWD), explained that the Town of Monument now has two permanent seats on the FCWD board. This will help the county to have more representation and to balance out representation with Pueblo.

Secondly, Commissioner Wysong warned about the mountain pine beetle outbreak along the Front Range. There is concern that any state funding for mitigation will come too late. Legislation begins May 1, and we need to get to work now, he said. When the pine beetle migrates, it can devastate a forest and increase the threat of wildfires. See page 18 for more information about pine beetles.



Above: The location of the Beacon Lite Water Tank Annexation is shown in red. *Map courtesy the Town of Monument.*

Public Works Director Thomas Tharnish introduced Ordinance 03-2026 to prohibit graywater treatment works. The ordinance intends to protect the town's water return flow. It would only protect the town's boundaries but should include the town's service area, he said. The council voted unanimously to continue the discussion and for staff to modify the language to include the service area, and to continue the public hearing at the March 16 meeting.

The council approved the RESPEC Master Service Agreement for \$532,899 for construction services and observation for the Beacon Lite Road pipeline and Monument Hill water tank projects.

Staff confirmed that the existing tank on Monument Hill is deteriorating and under state scrutiny and emphasized the urgency of completing the new tank project within the next nine to 12 months.

The council adjourned to an executive session.

Fire code adoption

Ungerleider asked for the adoption of the International Fire and Wildfire Resiliency Code as presented by Division Chief of Community Risk Reduction Jonathan Bradley of Monument Fire

District (MFD) on Feb. 17. MFD has adopted the new fire code and has asked that the Town of Monument and El Paso County to adopt the code. The Planning Commission will be updating the Building Codes Manual and adding the new fire code. The request passed unanimously, 7-0.

Other code ordinances were approved, 7-0. They are Health and Safety Regulations, repealing and readopting Title 8s; Municipal Court can set new court dates/times in case of emergency or weather; and the prohibition of graywater tank systems.

For more information on these and other code ordinances updates, go to https://library.municipalcode.com/co/monument/codes/code_of_ordinances

The council approved the purchase of a 2024 water emergency response truck for \$97,531. The old truck is 20 years old and has become too costly to repair.

Jennifer Phillips, director of Finance, presented the yearly update regarding the investment accounts policy. No changes have been made in investments or in any of the accounts since the last update.

Public comments

Hayes reminded the council that the Annual Awards Dinner is on April 2 at the Phil Long Music Center.

Haley Chapin, executive director of Tri-Lakes Cares, announced that the Taste of Tri-Lakes Cares fundraiser will be held on May 13 at the Spruce Mountain Events Center. For more information and to purchase tickets, go to trilakescares.org/events/taste-of-tri-lakes-cares.

Regular meetings are typically held on the first and third Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, located at 645 Beacon Lite Road, Monument. If the meeting falls on a holiday, it will be held the following Tuesday. See townofmonument.org for agendas and supporting documents.

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Monument Planning Commission, March 11

Balancing growth and the "joy of being here": Planning Commission recommends approval of auto dealership and Fire Training Facility

By Janet Sellers

The Monument Planning Commission convened on March 11 to review significant land use developments and administrative updates. The session was led by Chair Ray Egley, with Commissioners Donna Hatch, John Parr, and Martin Trujillo in attendance, establishing a quorum.

Alpine Buick Dealership at Falcon Commerce Center

The primary focus of the meeting was the application for the Alpine Buick GMC Dealership, a project involving both a final plat and a Final Planned Unit Development (PUD) plan for an automotive sales and service dealership. The proposed project spans 12.5 acres located in Phase 2 of the Falcon Commerce Center at the southeast

corner of Terrazzo Drive and West Baptist Road, behind the Pilot Travel Center.

The facility features two main buildings: Building A would face Terrazzo Drive to create a strong street frontage, while Building B for service and parts would be set farther back. The landscaping strategy is designed to balance town requirements with business needs. Trees and shrubs will screen about two-thirds of the site—primarily the "inventory" parking—while keeping the southeastern corner open for vehicle displays visible to the public. Engineering plans were verified to comply with both Monument standards and Colorado Springs drainage criteria.

Monument Fire Training Facility

The commission recommended approval (3-1) for

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