

to be done to alleviate what he anticipated would be a shortfall in funds and offered no proposals to reduce other costs prior to the proposed tax increase.

Treasurer John Hildebrandt discussed the current Tri-Lakes policy of paying 100 percent of employee medical benefits. No other regional fire district pays 100 percent of medical benefits. He

asked, "Can we afford to pay for 100 percent of everything?"

At the June 4 special Tri-Lakes board meeting called by Pocock, Chief Robert Denboske was placed on administrative leave. Denboske had not been named previously as a target of the Mountain States investigation. No other paid staff members were placed on admin-

istrative leave, despite Pocock's allusion May 25 to widespread complaints against several staff members. No reasons were given for this action. The Mountain States secret investigation report was discussed in executive session, and Pocock said no details of the report would ever be released to the public or the press when other directors complained

that Denboske would have no recourse. Pocock added that "if anyone challenges this investigation, have them file a suit."

When directed to make copies of the report for the board members, Office Manager Jennifer Martin expressed concern about her liability in having access to these documents since they involved privacy issues and she was

not bonded or covered by any liability insurance to protect her in sensitive matters.

At the June 12 special Tri-Lakes board meeting, attended by about 20 citizens, Director Bill Ingram noted two unauthorized "disclosures" that had occurred since the process began. He said that these disclosures may have affected Denboske's privacy

since he was twice named during the public portion of the process, which should have been done in executive session. Pocock admitted that he had made those disclosures, stating, "I was the one who made the disclosures, so please note it in the minutes." Ingram recommended that the advice of counsel be sought before taking any further action. But the rest of the board rejected this course of action.

The board passed a motion 5-2, with Directors Ingram and Rod Wilson opposed, to fire Denboske, effective immediately, "based upon the confidential assessment report by the Mountain States Employers Council," calling it a "disciplinary termination."

Following the meeting, a few residents expressed concern about the action. Larry Slaymaker asked Pocock, "Where is a copy of the report of the allegations against Robbie Denboske. Do we get a

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