



Above: New Palmer Lake Roads Trustee John Russell was sworn in at the September 12 PTLC meeting. *Photo by Lisa Hatfield.*

the Colorado Department of Education for all four years this highest possible award has been available. However, Superintendent Borman is "worried about sustaining the level of education we have over the last four years" because of budget cuts and their effects on teachers and students over time.

Some of Borman's comments were:

- Every time we win an award I find myself cringing a little bit, because it can create the perception that everything is just fine. We wouldn't ask for this if it wasn't necessary.
- In the last five years, we have cut 38 teachers (15 classroom, and 23 counselors and interventionists) to make budget.

- One of the most important aspects of this MLO is that every dollar stays here locally.

School Board President Jeff Ferguson's comments included:

- This is the first time in 20 years I've really been concerned about the trajectory of the school district.
- The path we are on is not sustainable. At some point in time we're going to run out of the capability of still providing the high quality of education with fewer and fewer resources.

For more MLO information, see D-38 and Woodmoor Improvement Association articles at www.ocn.me/v13n9.htm#lp and www.ocn.me/v13n9.htm#wia.

Mail ballots made permanent

Mail ballots used to be the exception, but now they are the rule in the state of Colorado. The trustees unanimously approved Ordinance 5 of 2013 authorizing the conduct of permanent mail ballot elections for the town of Palmer Lake. The town already was using mail ballots on a case-by-case basis, and this ordinance will reduce the amount of paperwork required by the town clerk for each future election.

Note: House Bill 13-1303 now mandates mail ballots for general, primary, odd-year, coordinated, presidential, special legislative, recall, and congressional vacancy elections. Ballots will be mailed to voters, but postage is not pre-paid for the return of the ballots by the voters, who can also drop off their ballots at designated locations.

Comprehensive Plan updated

The board unanimously approved a slightly updated version of the town's Comprehensive Plan, which was originally written in "in the late '70s or early '80s. It's a dream of what we wanted our town to look like," McDonald said. Gaddis said the plan can be adapted any time growth occurs in town. Residents can look at copies of the plan by visiting the town office.

New business license approved

The trustees unanimously approved a new business li-

cense for Richard and Jennifer Hitzemann, owners of Peak Pursuits dba Mountain Boy Sledworks, 583 County Line Road, which manufactures handmade wood sleds, toboggans, and ornaments.

Committee reports

McDonald said the Taste of Palmer Lake raised \$5,500 in August, and the Haunted Lake fundraiser is scheduled for the weekend before Halloween. Proceeds will go to the Awake the Lake Committee.

Parks and Recreation Trustee Mike Patrizi said that new trees were planted around the ballfield and mowing has been done.

Water Trustee Michael Maddox said water use is dropping slowly. In August, the town used a total of 6.4 million gallons, with an average daily use of 207,000 gallons.

Fire Trustee Rich Kuehster did not have exact response numbers to present but said August had been quiet and that maintenance is needed on some of the trucks. The Palmer Lake Volunteer Fire Department is "working on protocols for what they've learned from Black Forest for dispatch out of Colorado Springs and El Paso County Sheriff to get the right resources to the right place," he said.

New Roads Trustee John Russell was sworn in by McDonald. His term runs through April 2014, when the next council election will be held.

Bereth said, "We will have to cut everyone's budget for next year 2 to 3 percent. We're down 10 to 12 percent in revenue right now." She said she hopes to have the budget for 2014 completed by November.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

The next meeting will be at 6 p.m. Oct. 10 in Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally the second Thursday of the month. The public is invited to attend all public meetings. Information: 481-2953.

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Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority, Sept. 26

Formula changed for calculating taxes

By Jim Kendrick

On Sept. 26, the Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority (BRRTA) reduced the valuation formula that will be used for calculating BRRTA's 1 percent tax on the value of building materials for new construction. The BRRTA sales and use tax was approved by BRRTA voters in the November 2006 election, but the Pikes Peak Regional Building Department (PPRBD) did not begin collecting this tax until Aug 1, 2013.

The new 2013 PPRBD valuation formula it had been using for estimating the taxable cost of building materials was 40 percent of the total calculated at a valuation rate of \$107 per square foot (SF) for both finished and unfinished areas. The 2008 valuation formula used by the Town of Monument for estimating the taxable cost of building materials is 50 percent of the sum of \$94 per SF for finished areas, \$37 per SF for unfinished garages, and \$15 per SF for unfinished basements.

The BRRTA board, after a very technical hearing, unanimously approved switching to the 2008 Town of Monument valuation formula from the new 2013 PPRBD valuation formula for calculating the 1 percent BRRTA sales and use tax.

The board unanimously ratified the final copy of the previously approved BRRTA 2012 audit, an amendment to the 2013 budget, and the 2014 BRRTA budget.

Monument Trustee Jeff Kaiser was absent from the meeting.

Financial items

The board approved the following claims:

- \$4,250 to Biggs Kofford PC for the 2012 audit.
- \$10,147 to CliftonLarsenAllen LLP for accounting, district management, and sales tax administration.
- \$7,994 to CliftonLarsenAllen LLP for accounting, district management, and sales tax administration.
- \$2,302 to Spencer Fane & Grimshaw LLP for legal services and sales tax administration.
- \$3,780 to Spencer Fane & Grimshaw LLP for legal services and sales tax administration.
- \$5,913 to T. Charles Wilson Insurance for insurance.

Bartow stated the final construction cost for the I-25 Baptist Road interchange project was \$18,319,199.27. The originally budgeted cost was \$15,681,818. She added that this will probably be the last accounting reports on this project.

The net BRRTA sales and use fee revenue through May 31 was \$461,544, a 12 percent increase compared to 2012. This revenue is used to pay the owners of the privately held BRRTA bonds that financed the \$18 million construction cost.

The board unanimously accepted the financial reports as presented.

2013 budget amended

BRRTA District Manager Denise Denslow, of CliftonLarsenAllen, said that the 2013 budget was being amended to move the remaining capital projects fund balance for the Baptist Road interchange project to the debt service fund.

During the public comments portion of this public hearing, Dennis Minchow of Forest Lakes Metropolitan District asked why the construction budget fund was being closed out and transferred to debt service when the improvements for the west end of Baptist Road remained unfunded. Bartow replied that the funds from these bond sales must be used solely for construction or bond debt service. County Clerk and Recorder Wayne Williams added that none of the \$250,000 in road use fees budgeted in 2013 for West Baptist Road improvements was being transferred to the interchange debt service fund.



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