

“We are not first responders. We are here with purse strings and resources and making sure things happen,” Lathen said. The OEM director puts all these systems in place and will now be in the organizational chart under county administration instead of under the Sheriff’s Office, she said.

County Attorney Amy Folsom said there is no prohibition on allowing El Paso Public Safety Tax 1A funds intended for the OEM to follow the OEM program from the Sheriff’s Office to county oversight. County Budget Officer Nicola Sapp said these are restricted funds and are subject to multiple layers of scrutiny through the annual budget and audit process.

Commissioner Peggy Littleton made a motion to table the resolution to make more time for public discussion and find out what the transition plan is, but the motion died for lack of a second.

The resolution to transfer the OEM back to the BOCC was then approved 4-1. Littleton’s dissenting comments included:

- Many leaders and professionals did not have the opportunity to give timely input on the resolution or how the transition might happen.
- Why was the resolution originally written to take effect immediately upon adjournment of the meeting Sept. 23, but the BOCC would not have had direct control of personnel or facilities until Oct. 17?
- The Sheriff’s Office recently spent \$900,000 in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) funds to install fiber-optic cable from the office to the new OEM facilities, and ICE would need to be reim-

bursed somehow.

- We have not discussed fully what 1A funds can be utilized based on the tax measure ballot wording approved by voters in 2012.

Commissioner Darryl Glenn proposed a separate motion requiring that the formal transfer of the OEM should not occur until the BOCC approved a transition plan that addressed organizational structure, duties, and responsibilities of the OEM director, including a summary of the operational responsibilities of the OEM director and other supporting agencies during pre-, declared, and post-disaster incidents. “The sheriff and incoming sheriff and/or their representatives, and the county administration and/or his representatives shall be responsible for developing a transition plan. The BOCC liaison shall work with the transition committee on the development of this plan, and formal adoption of the transition plan shall occur no later than Dec. 1,” the motion said.

Glenn commented after the motion that the new transition committee needed to develop contingency plans for funding and come up with a transition plan that is in the best interests of the committee. The commissioners unanimously approved the transition plan requirement motion.

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El Paso County Commissioner Darryl Glenn’s Town Hall Meeting, Sept. 27

Talking about traffic and weeds with County Commissioner Glenn

By Michael Justice

During a Town Hall meeting hosted by County Commissioner Darryl Glenn on Sept. 27 at Lewis-Palmer High School, county representatives presented information concerning traffic improvements, weed ordinances, and upcoming regional water issues.

Roundabouts planned

County Engineer André Brackin explained some of the benefits of roundabouts compared with signalized intersections. He pointed to the success of the roundabouts on Northgate Road and shared plans for future roundabouts around El Paso County.

Sheriff’s Deputy Andrew Thompson was featured in a short video explaining the driving procedures and safety of roundabout intersections. He emphasized how they prevent run-throughs and “T-bone” collisions.

Brackin said some of the benefits include a 78 percent reduction in fatal or severe crashes and a 48 percent lower instance of overall vehicle crashes, reducing head-on collisions and rear-end collisions. Roundabouts boast an increased opportunity for pedestrian crossings, foot traffic at each entrance, increased economic efficiency, are less expensive to maintain because there are no signal parts to continually replace, and all vehicle types are allowed. Brackin reported the planned roundabout intersections included:

- Old Denver Road, Baptist Road, and Woodcarver Road, which has funding available already
- Gleneagle Drive and Struthers Road
- Baptist Road, Hodgen Road, and Roller Coaster Road.

He said the roundabouts would save the county \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year for each roundabout, compared to an intersection with a traffic signal.

Brackin said that the water control problem at the intersection of Northgate Road and Struthers Road is scheduled to be improved within six months.

Brackin discussed several other traffic safety concerns, including Monument Hill Road, Lake Woodmoor Drive by the Brookmoor subdivision, and Beacon Light Road from Highway 105 to County Line Road. The county is gathering community input concerning planning and design, including suggestions from Lewis-Palmer School District 38 regarding frontage road safety, since Monument Hill Road is now maintained by the county instead of the Colorado Department of Transportation.

Weed control

At the meeting, the weed issue—not noxious weeds and not marijuana—was a lengthy concern. Residents were disappointed that the county could not contact the current owner of a property; others were concerned by the snakes and overgrown tall grass. Max Rothschild, director of the Development Services Department, said proper channels are being used to bring about ordinance change that would be a solution to the weed problem on the old Gleneagle Golf Course. He assured residents that he understood their complaints and was making every effort to find a tangible solution. The current county ordinance is only able to enforce weed control on 2½-acre lots, while the area in question is zoned for five-acre lots (RR-5). He asked local residents for their feedback and suggestions on solutions.

Glenn said once the Board of County Commissioners has approved a new weed ordinance addressing larger lots, then it could mow overgrown properties and put a lien on them to cover the cost of the work.

Private citizens present two more ballot issues

Susan Davies enlightened the audience on issue 1A, saying voting “yes” on 1A in the November election

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