

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, May 20

Summer Safety Fair set for June 14

By Nancy Wilkins

At the May 20 Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) board meeting, Fire Chief Vinny Burns and Assistant Fire Chief Scott Ridings announced DWFPD will host a Summer Safety Fair 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 14 at Fire Station 1 at 15415 Gleneagle Drive.

All district residents are invited to meet firefighters, learn about wildland firefighting, and visit with many vendors who will offer safety topics for homeowners and kids. A free lunch of hotdogs and chips will be provided. Kids will be able to climb on a fire truck and squirt water.

Fire mitigation efforts continue
DWFPD continues to help its residents with fire mitigation efforts. Ridings reported the district is very busy with wood chipping. Administrative Assistant Cheryl Marshall said she receives four or five calls a day requesting information on this program.

District policy is to provide wood chipping for groups of five homeowners living in the same neighborhood. District residents belonging to a homeowners association (HOA) are asked to contact their HOA before contacting DWFPD directly. Ridings said DWFPD is the only fire district that he knows of in the surrounding area that provides this service.

Financial report

Administrative Assistant Cheryl Marshall gave the financial report for May: Bank balances reported on April 30 are as follows: Peoples National Bank, \$48,244; PNB Colorado Peak Fund, \$179,993; Colorado Trust, \$439,395; and Wells Fargo Public Trust \$846,486, for total of \$1.5 million.

Expenses for 2014 through the end of April were 18 percent.

2013 budget approved

The board unanimously voted to amend the 2013 budget, adjusting both revenue and expense budget line items. The board approved an amended budget increase for the cost of the November 2013 mill levy election, overtime pay due to the Black Forest Fire, vehicle maintenance, and health insurance.

The amended budget also adjusted expenses that were under budget. For example, in 2013 the amount for accident insurance was budgeted at \$17,864. The actual expense for accident insurance in 2013 was reported under budget at \$13,901, so the board reduced the 2013 budget for accident insurance to \$14,000.

Aluminum radiators unreliable at DWFPD?

The frequency and cost of repairs needed to fix or replace aluminum radiators in several fire trucks at DWFPD is an ongoing concern for Burns and Ridings. According to the April 15 minutes, the aluminum radiators in fire engines 511 and 513 and ladder truck 531 all needed repairs or replacement. A concern at DWFPD is that a possible manufacturer defect occurs in the same type of aluminum radiators installed in fire engines in other fire districts.

No decision on pension increase

The volunteer firefighter pension board met for the second time this year to consider increasing benefits, and Lt. Bryan Ackerman received another "wait and see" from the board. Ackerman's current proposal would raise benefits for retired volunteer firefighters to the same amount of benefits given from Black Forest Fire Protection District. Ackerman also suggested the raise in benefits might help

recruit and retain more volunteer firefighters.

Director Harland Baker noted that an increase from \$400 to \$500 per month was 20 percent, and suggested that the board consider the possibility of a smaller increase this year. The board asked Ackerman to research and present comparative pension benefit rates from other fire districts. Another pension board meeting will be scheduled after Ackerman notifies DWFPD when his research is complete.

Volunteer firefighters needed

Ackerman said volunteer firefighters are always needed, and he is currently looking for more volunteers. The summer safety fair hosted by DWFPD is an opportunity for adults to inquire about volunteer opportunities.

Marshall leaving district

Marshall announced she was leaving DWFPD. The board, Burns, and Ridings thanked Marshall for her contribution to

the department and wished her success. Marshall will be joining her family in Idaho this summer.

There were 158 district calls reported in April, down from 166 calls in 2013, a 5 percent decrease. The board entered an executive session for "determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiations." No public announcements were expected after the session.

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District board meetings are normally held the third Tuesday of each month, 7:00 p.m. at Station 1, located at 15415 Gleneagle Dr. The next meeting is scheduled June 17. Please call 488-8680, a non-emergency number, for more information, or visit www.wescottfire.org.

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Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, May 28

District considers merger options

By Lisa Hatfield

At the May 28 Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) meeting, four new board members were sworn in, and the board contemplated a merger with another district, approved the 2013 audit, and received the April financial report.

Director Bruce Fritzsche was excused.

Newly-elected board members sworn in

Office Manager Jennifer Martin read the oath of office to the four board members elected May 7: Jacob Shirk, John Hildebrandt, Michael Smaldino, and Larry Smith. The two newest directors were Smaldino, a Monument resident since 2006 and firefighter in the Colorado Springs Fire Department since 1998 who is starting a four-year term, and Smith, a Woodmoor resident for over 20 years who is starting a two-year term. The current board now includes:

- Jacob Shirk, president
- Roger Lance, vice president
- John Hildebrandt, treasurer
- Michael Smaldino, secretary
- Bill Ingram, director
- Larry Smith, director
- Bruce Fritzsche, director

Shirk explained a new procedure: There will be a roll-call vote for all resolutions



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