

with TLMFPD on July 23 and announced that Wescott's board approved joining TLMFPD in the whole merger process. "So now we are looking at a potential merger of Larkspur, ourselves, and Wescott," Truty said. Wescott has "formally separated their consolidation efforts with Black Forest, so that allows them to come in with us," he said. Truty didn't say when the Wescott board made either of these decisions.

In the deputy chief of operations search process, Truty has selected an individual he has worked with before to come here and "interview the whole staff, rank by rank, to get a feel for everyone, and then he will decide if he wants to be a part of this organization." His mission would be to focus on operations, including buildings, vehicles, staffing, training, and personnel development.

Truty presented information to the citizens of Palmer Lake on July 19 regarding options for them and their volunteer fire department in the future. "The cheapest option for their residents would be to be included in TLMFPD, but it's not always a financial decision on their part.... They feel very strongly about their volunteer fire department," Truty said. See related article on page 22.

Some of the other items reported were:

- Of three open positions in the district, two will remain open until it is known that 2015 property taxes will be able to pay for them.
- The third position is a SAFER replacement, which cannot be vacant for more than 90 days, and a part-time firefighter has already been offered this position.
- The total increase in district salary expenses in 2015 with the conclusion of the SAFER grant in 2014 will be \$350,000.
- The paperwork to resolve the property line question at Station 1, located on Highway 105 west of the railroad tracks, will most likely be approved by the county so that the next step, state approval for well drilling, can be pursued.

- The septic system the district is trying to install at Station 2, located at Roller Coaster Road and Highway 105, will need to be an "engineered" system and therefore more expensive, due to the complicated soil structure of the proposed septic field.
- The district's fleet is "getting better slowly but surely" with Engine 1 and Engine 3 receiving replacement rebuilt diesel engines and the engine shutdowns on the aerial receiving a new turbocharger for its diesel engine; Engine 2 will be scheduled for repairs after both other engines are operational.
- The district will get a new Insurance Services Office evaluation soon. This is used by some insurance companies as an overall indicator of the quality of fire-suppression abilities in a fire district. The last evaluation for TLMFPD was in 2006.
- The new TLMFPD website is under development.
- Truty asked for feedback from the board on the memos and supporting documents emailed to them before each meeting so that the directors can be prepared with questions on each topic.

Family medical leave policy amended

The board voted unanimously to change the district's family medical leave policy so that "key" employees (the highest-paid 10 percent, which includes battalion chiefs and higher)

would always have to be accepted back after using the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). If there were performance problems with an employee, it would not be a FMLA issue and would not be dealt with by the board but rather in a performance review.

Increased employee withholding for pension voted down

Just as the Wescott Fire Protection District was asked to do this month, the TLMFPD board voted to give input



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