

Monument Board of Trustees, Dec. 1

Trustee resigns; 2015 budget approved

By Lisa Hatfield

Trustee Stan Gingrich resigned from the board at the Dec. 1 Monument Board of Trustees meeting. Then the remaining trustees approved the 2015 budget and appropriations ordinances, appointed Pamela Smith interim town treasurer, and received donation of a parcel of land.

Trustee Kelly Elliott was absent.

Trustee Gingrich resigns

Trustee Stan Gingrich tendered his resignation from the board, effective Dec. 1, since he moved to a house outside the town limits, making him no longer eligible to be a trustee. Town Clerk Cynthia Sirochman said that the town now had 60 days to appoint a new trustee or hold an election.

Gingrich's parting words included challenges: "To Monument's citizens, I charge you with holding the Board of Trustees accountable to you. Inform the trustees of the issues you face! To the trustees and town staff, remember our primary objectives: securing our water future, implementing the capital plan, improving the infrastructure, and continuing to amend and create ordinances that are family- and business-friendly, all within confines of the Monument vision and mission statement." Gingrich then thanked his wife, Karen, for her support of him while he was on the board.

2015 budget and appropriations approved

No members of the public commented during the posted and advertised public hearing on the 2015 budget. The trustees had discussed the 2015 budget in detail at the Nov. 15 budget workshop. No new discussion happened on Dec. 1.

The trustees unanimously approved an ordinance adopting the 2015 budget and a second ordinance appropriating sums of money to the various funds in these amounts:

- General Fund \$5.09 million
- Community Development Fund \$53,010
- Conservation Trust Fund \$45,025
- Debt Service Fund \$153,875
- Storm Drainage Impact Fee Fund \$100,350

- Water Enterprise Fund \$1.56 million
- Capital Projects Building Fund \$365,600
- 2A Water ASD Fund \$2.09 million

Town Manager Pamela Smith said the town really will not know where it stands financially until March, "when the audit is done and we know" what funds are brought forward, so the amounts listed could change then.

The trustees unanimously approved a resolution to authorize the certification of the property tax mill levy of 6.289 mills to the El Paso County assessor for the budget year 2015. Trustee John Howe said that this amount has not changed in the last 10 years, according to his research. Smith said the town would be allowed up to 6.871 mill levy under the TABOR tax amendment, but that the town has sufficient sales tax revenue to cover its bases right now. Mayor Pro-Tem Jeff Kaiser said it was good to "hold the line and live within our budget."

Smith appointed interim treasurer

The trustees unanimously approved a resolution appointing Smith as interim town treasurer until a new town treasurer is appointed. Town Clerk Cynthia Sirochman administered the oath to Smith. The board requested this step after the departure of town Treasurer Monica Harder.

Town Attorney Gary Shupp said that it is not a conflict of interest for Smith to hold both the town manager and treasurer positions as long as it is just an interim step. Smith said she hopes to have a new treasurer hired by early spring.

Parcel donated to town

Planning Director Mike Pesicka presented a resolution to approve a quitclaim deed from Harley Jergensen transferring ownership of a parcel of land to the town northeast of Mitchell Avenue and Santa Fe Avenue west of the railroad tracks. The 0.40 acre is zoned R-2 (residential) but is not developable. The parcel would be useful in any possible expansion of the Mitchell Avenue right-of-way, Pesicka said.

Trustee Becki Tooley asked if the property could be used as a new location for the bulk water station currently at the northwest corner of Old Denver Road and Wagon Gap Trail. Pesicka said it could not, since the parcel has residential development on three sides, and it is not a good access for water trucks because of its location on a hill and near a curve in Mitchell Avenue.

The trustees approved the resolution unanimously and thanked Jergensen for his donation to the town.

Recognition of Martinez

Mayor Rafael Dominguez presented a plaque of appreciation and four restaurant gift certificates to Engineering As-

sistant Tom Martinez in recognition for his management of the first phase of the three-year downtown sidewalks projects. Dominguez said, "You did a wonderful job. I know that firsthand. It took a lot of coordination. Some people were upset, and you calmed them down. We appreciate what you did down there." Smith said it's amazing for a town of this size to have an employee of the caliber of Martinez.

Financial report

Smith presented the disbursements over \$5,000, which the board approved unanimously:

- City of Colorado Springs, \$6,020 for 2014 radio user fees for police department
- Schmidt Construction Co., 78,361 for Old Denver Road and Teachout Creek Road repairs

Town manager's report

Smith's comments included:

- Sirochman was appointed chair of the Colorado Municipal Clerks Association Audit Committee for 2015 and will volunteer her time there.
- Town auditor Kyle Logan made his initial 2014 audit visit.
- A town staff longevity bonus is being discussed.
- Tree lighting at Limbach Park on Dec. 6 included an ice sculpture, caroling, a food drive, and a visit from Santa. She thanked the public works crew's extra time and effort to put up the lights at the north end of the park.
- A post from Monument police on its Facebook page thanked citizens who brought treats and lots of positive feedback to show their support "in light of recent events" in the country. "We are proud to serve our community and thankful to receive such support."
- The "Shop Monument for the Holidays" campaign organized by Community Relations Specialist Madeline VanDenHoek was scheduled from Nov. 22 to Dec. 31.

Public and trustees' comments

Monument resident Glen Baux expressed his frustration with his experience with both the Development Services department and Monument Sanitation District, which is a separate legal entity from the town, in trying to follow the process to open a catering business in Monument.

Later in the meeting, Mayor Pro-Tem Jeff Kaiser said he hoped the town is proactive in helping potential businesses figure out how to comply with the regulations and paperwork.

Dominguez said the Monument board members would again make donations to purchase bikes to donate to Santa on Patrol this year. Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Terri Hayes said that the Chamber's annual holiday business after hours would include a toy collection for Santa on Patrol.

Trustee John Howe said that Mary Russelavage, who had served on the Monument town staff, died on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Russelavage had been a fundraiser coordinator for the Cops for Kids program, played Mrs. Santa Claus at Monument Small Town Christmas, was president of the July 4 Fireworks Committee, worked for the towns of Palmer Lake and Monument, was a founding member of the Tri-Lakes Lions Club, ran for mayor of Monument in 2014, and was a photographer and mailing day volunteer for Our Community News. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

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