

Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Feb. 24

Staffing and fleet discussed

By Lisa Hatfield

The chief's report took the bulk of the Feb. 24 meeting of the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) board. Topics discussed included board elections, employee retention, impact fees, and vehicle replacement.

Board elections

The TLMFPD public election for Board of Directors will be conducted on Tuesday, May 3, 2016. See www.tlmfire.org to read statements from each of the board candidates. At least six people are running for four open positions. Call the district with any questions.

Employee retention discussed

Three employees have left the district recently, most recently a firefighter/paramedic named Elliot Linke who specialized in communications, and Truty said the issue of retaining employees needed to be examined. In answer to Secretary Mike Smaldino's questions, he said exit interviews indicated that they "had aspirations for something more than the district could provide for them," including the wages and benefits packages they could get elsewhere. "No one has given the impression if we had done something different it would have changed their mind about going," Truty said.

President Jake Shirk, who is also the Monument police chief, said that Linke would be receiving a police chief's commendation at the March 7 Monument Board of Trustees meeting for his contributions to the Police Department.

Deputy Chief Randy Trost has been working with union members on a six-member hiring committee since January, he said. Issues they are discussing include the difficulty of hiring trained firefighter/paramedics and how to run future training academies.

Chief's report

Truty said that the crew did an "outstanding job" on a garage fire on Feb. 18 on McShane Place. "That amount of fire usually extends into the house," but he said the crew

confined it to the garage "with very little extension."

Truty mentioned Colorado HB 16-1088, Fire Protection District Impact Fee On New Development, which is of interest to the district since the Tri-Lakes area anticipates so much growth in the next five years. The board voted in December to remove impact fees. The consensus of the directors was that the district needed to be ready to document why any impact fees they did require in the future were justified, whether the proposed legislation passed or not.

Truty presented the directors with a draft vehicle replacement planning chart and asked for their comments. It listed the expected life span of each vehicle, current replacement cost, and how much the district should be setting aside to replace each one according to a set schedule in the future, paying cash and avoiding interest payments. The district should already have set aside \$2.9 million in order to be preparing for these future vehicle replacements, he said, but nothing was being set aside right now because of the budget.

President Shirk said, "We don't have that money... Maybe it would be better to instead do leases at low interest rates and keep cash intact for emergencies." Truty said the district is currently paying \$290,000 a year for leases. Smaldino said it was good to try to project up to 10 years in the future, because having so many big costs coming all at one time "is not working."

Other topics covered included:

- The possibility of sharing the costs of fleet maintenance with neighboring fire districts by hiring a properly certified mechanic and writing an intergovernmental agreement.
- Potential bond and mill levy consultant George K. Baum & Co. thinks a mill levy ballot measure would be a better plan for TLMFPD than a bond levy, but the firm has said it will not charge the district for their advice unless they run a bond levy election. Truty is working on Plan B.

- Office Administrator Jennifer Martin reported that the new ambulance billing company is performing more efficiently than the old one.

Trost summarized many issues that need attention, including:

- The fleet continues with preventive maintenance.
- The new battalion chief vehicle has been delivered. It displays the new gold scroll-work "TLM" logo which eventually will be used on all district vehicles as they are replaced.
- The new brush truck is close to being delivered.
- The emergency flashing lights on the older vehicles are not as visible as the new vehicles' LED lights and may be a safety hazard even though when they were purchased they conformed with regulations. Updating lights on three engines and the tower ladder could cost up to \$25,000.
- Ice and drainage problems are causing leaks in roofs, gutters, and downspouts at Station 1, Station 2 and Station 3.
- The roof at Station 1 allows snow chunks to fall that could hit pedestrians.
- Various lighting problems at Station 1, Station 2 have not been fixed yet.
- New exhaust venting system for the fire houses is being installed soon.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m., March 23 in the Monument Town Hall at 645 Beacon Lite Road. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 719-484-0911.

Would you like to help Our Community News report on the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District? Please contact Lisa Hatfield at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority, Feb. 19

CDOT reimbursement to BRRTA finalized at \$12.51 million

By Jim Kendrick

At a special noon meeting on Feb. 19, the Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority (BRRTA) board unanimously approved the final settlement amount for Amendment 2 to intergovernmental Contract 08 HA200049, Project IM 025341, between BRRTA and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for a final CDOT payment that was \$2,940.57 less than the amount of the resolution approved on Jan. 8, due to the loss of some receipts and documentation. CDOT previously made one other reimbursement of \$3 million with Amendment 1 in May 2011. (www.ocn.me/v16n2.htm#brta0108)

The absences of El Paso County Commissioners Daryl Glenn and Dennis Hisey were unanimously excused.

Elaine Johnsen, funding optimization manager of Administration & Financial Services, El Paso County, said that she had negotiated this justifiable amount with Debbie Carillo of the CDOT business office. This \$12.51 mil-

lion settlement completes the state's reimbursement of all verifiable direct I-25 Baptist Road interchange expansion construction contract costs of \$15.5 million. The BRRTA directors had unanimously approved the slightly higher approximate amount of this second CDOT reimbursement payment on Dec. 28, 2015. (www.ocn.me/v16n1.htm#brta1228)

Johnsen recommended that she be authorized to prepare and submit a BRRTA invoice for the negotiated final reimbursement of \$12,511,228.43, the amount that can be substantiated by any future audit, and also prepare, sign, and submit a cover letter to CDOT for this invoice to close this matter. She noted that this second CDOT reimbursement coupled with BRRTA's existing debt service fund reserves, about \$2.38 million, is large enough to "fully repay" all costs for early redemption of all remaining BRRTA revenue bonds. Senior Assistant County Attorney Lori Seago said that the board should formally approve the

amended, slightly lower final CDOT contract repayment. The board unanimously approved Johnsen's and Seago's recommendations.

BRRTA voters approved a \$21.5 million sales tax revenue bond issue financed by a temporary 20-year one-cent sales tax within the BRRTA service area in the Nov. 6, 2006 election. The timing and final total costs for principal, interest, and administrative costs for early redemption have not been determined.

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

The next regular board meeting is scheduled for March 18 at 2:30 p.m. in the Academy Conference Room of Citizen Service Center, 1675 W. Garden of the Gods Road. Meetings are normally held on the second Friday of the second month of the quarter. Information: 520-5547 or 520-6386.

Jim Kendrick can be reached at jimkendrick@ocn.me.

Woodmoor Improvement Association Board of Directors, Feb. 24

Board plans Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

By Jackie Burhans

The Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board discussed plans for wildfire preparedness education and plans for homes on the Gleneagle Golf Course at its Feb. 24 meeting.

Country Club support

Vice President Peter Bille noted concern over a recent report on plans to build 56 homes on the Gleneagle Golf Course. He affirmed the WIA board's commitment to maintaining good relations with The Country Club at Woodmoor and to their success.

Wildfire preparedness

Forestry Director Robert Benjamin announced plans for a Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on May 7 to be held at a local church. Detailed information will be announced. Fire Marshal John Vincent of the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD) suggested that it might be nice to coordinate activities with Palmer

Lake, which is having a similar event in the same timeframe. Vincent further commented that there are four Fire-wise communities in his area with 45 to go. He would like to see communities coordinate and become one big Fire-wise community and then start looking at the next step, which is a Fire Adapted community. See <http://www.fire-adapted.org> for more information.

Board report highlights

- A discussion on Nextdoor.com reported numerous thefts that included six cases of fraud calls about the IRS, the U.S. Treasury, or law enforcement in addition to fake calls about grandchildren being arrested. Always verify with the appropriate agency.
- The security camera installation at the Barn is complete.
- There will be a focus on getting more information out to the community via Nextdoor and Facebook.
- The board unanimously approved the Woodmoor

Public Safety Standard Operating Procedures and Training Manual.

- The board unanimously approved renewing Architectural Control Committee administrator Bob Pearsall's authority to approve common projects. Last year, 85 percent of all projects were approved on the spot by Pearsall.

The WIA Board of Directors usually meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the Barn at 1691 Woodmoor Drive, Monument. The next meeting will be on March 23. The WIA calendar can be found at: <https://www.woodmoor.org/wia-calendar/>. WIA board meeting minutes can be found at: <https://www.woodmoor.org/meeting-minutes/> once approved and posted.

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