

spent most of his 80-minute presentation educating the new trustees on how a Colorado town audit works. The year 2015 was potentially controversial for the town's finances, since besides the water rates debates it included a \$350,000 settlement with Colonial Management Group, but this was not mentioned. See www.ocn.me/v16n6.htm#mbot0502.

Logan and Town Treasurer Pamela Smith answered questions about controls within the town and about the water enterprise fund. Logan explained that the water fund lost money again, but state statute requires a balanced fund, so money was transferred again from the general fund as it has every year since 2012. He said he would have suggested raising water rates just as the town did in

March 2016.

At the start of the executive session agenda item, Town Manager Chris Lowe said that because this was a special meeting, a two-thirds vote would be required for passage of a motion. Lowe added that he did not expect any vote to be taken at this special meeting.

The consensus of the trustees was that it would be better if all seven trustees were in attendance to discuss anything regarding the controversial water utility.

Then Lowe mentioned that he had talked on the telephone with Mayor Jeff Kaiser, who had called Lowe just before this June 27 meeting to tell him that he had been injured and could not get to the meeting. Lowe said he outlined the purpose of the executive session for Kaiser.

Palmer Lake Town Council, June 9 and June 23

Fireworks to return to Palmer Lake for 4th

By James Howald

In June, the Palmer Lake Town Council met twice: on June 9 the town council met at its usual location, the Palmer Lake town hall; on June 23 Palmer Ridge High School hosted the town council as well as the boards of several local water districts for a showing of The Great Divide, a documentary about water issues, in their auditorium. On June 9, the board granted a special event permit to the Palmer Lake Fireworks Committee, allowing the group to bring Fourth of July fireworks back to Palmer Lake. The board also heard presentations on wildfire preparedness, passed a resolution allowing Town Administrator Cathy Green-Sinnard to finalize a contract, and granted a new business license.

Permit granted to allow July 4 fireworks over Palmer Lake

At its previous meeting on May 12, the town council heard a request for a special event permit from the Palmer Lake Fireworks Committee, a group of local residents headed by Jennifer Coopman, who were planning a July Fourth fireworks display. At the meeting in May the town council raised a number of issues about the plan the group presented, and asked for more detail on parking, security, and public safety.

On June 9, to the great delight of fireworks lovers in the audience, Green-Sinnard announced that the committee had, over the last month, successfully addressed all outstanding issues. Representatives from the Palmer Lake Police and Fire departments told the board they were in favor of granting the permit.

Fire Trustee Rich Kuehster reminded the committee that they would need an evacuation plan, a permit from the Colorado Department of Transportation if they planned to restrict traffic on Highway 105 during the event, and that if there were any active fires within a 48-hour window before the fireworks the town might be forced to withdraw the permit.

Following those reminders, and to cheers from the

audience, the board voted unanimously to grant the permit and let the 20-minute fireworks display proceed.

Fire mitigation effort still underway; more funds available

Resident Judith Harrington, who has spearheaded the town's fire mitigation efforts and has served on the town council, introduced Forester Michelle Connelly, an employee of the Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP). The women told the board that additional funds had been found to help the town continue its successful mitigation efforts.

Approximately \$90,000 has been made available to the town by The Nature Conservancy, Connelly said, adding that the Palmer Lake area is crucial to protect. The town will need to raise \$158,000 in matching funds to make the most of the grant money, Connelly said. She also discussed a project managed by the U.S. Forest Service that will affect the town, since one of the town's two reservoirs is on land owned by the federal government.

Board authorizes Green-Sinnard to sign contract

The board voted unanimously to authorize Green-Sinnard to execute a contract with the Colorado Department of Agriculture that will provide the town with a \$2,000 grant to eradicate noxious weeds, and will require the town to provide an equal amount of matching funds.

Business License awarded

The board voted unanimously to approve a business license to Carol Nolan for an in-home family child care business named Carol's Cares, which will do business at 726 Westward Lane.

The two meetings for July will be at 6:30 p.m. on July 14 and July 28, at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. For more information call 481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at jameshowald@ocn.me.

However, Lowe added that he had not talked to Trustee Kelly Elliott about the executive session. This lack of equivalent notification to Elliott about the executive session upset several trustees. The trustees then voted unanimously to refuse to go into executive session at all and they immediately adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

See related June 20 Monument Board of Trustees article on page 16.

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

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Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, June 21

Mill levy decision postponed to next year

By Lisa Hatfield

At the June 21 meeting of the Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD), the consensus of the directors was to wait until summer 2017 to decide about putting a possible mill levy override (MLO) vote on the ballot.

Director Harland Baker and Assistant Chief Scott Ridings were absent.

Citizen input needed this year on MLO ballot decision

Chief Vinny Burns said it is time to discuss the future of the fire district and what type and level of service its residents expect and will be willing to pay for in the future. The City of Colorado Springs continues to annex more land to the north, in the direction of Wescott, and the result is that the Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) is now serving more territory overlapping with the south end of the Wescott District court-directed dual taxation area. These post-annexation city residents now have the choice

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