

the RFP and bid processes followed by Public Works, one created by the board in 2017. When Coopman suggested reviewing the processes, Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Elliott said, “I don’t agree to going through RFP process and micromanaging Public Works and getting into analysis paralysis when the board had approved the process before.”

- He said he was disturbed that Forsgren Associates had not created a system for radium removal and that it was this firm that designed the town’s water master plan.

The request failed with Coopman, Bornstein, and Clark voting against. *See www.ocn.me/v16n11.htm#mbot1017 for a BOT discussion with Forsgren and Associates from 2016 about options for dealing with the levels of radium in Well 9.*

Resolution for Well 7 engineering and design modifications

Next, Tharnish asked for \$42,250 to create a new backwash system and to replace valves on the almost 30-year-old Well 7, saying it is becoming increasingly difficult to find parts. Forsgren was the only company to bid on the project.

Bornstein abstained from the vote with no reason given. Clark voted no and Coopman also voted against, identifying the following concerns:

- He referenced the RFP and bid processes again and the number of companies that were asked to

bid, many of which do not have experience in radium removal. “I’m tired of wasting money, especially to the water system. “It’s foolish to do it in this cookie cutter way,” he said.

- Coopman cited the lack of communication with the board about water projects as another reason to vote against this request. “I want dialogue, I want to learn, I want to verify, I want to be educated by outside individuals about the totality of what we’re working on here.” Tharnish said, “I believe I have communicated to you I don’t know how many times, every project has been presented to you, in 12 years, what I’m hearing from one trustee in particular, you tell me that we don’t communicate the needs of this community, either you’re not hearing or don’t want to.”
- Coopman also cited the lack of prioritization of water projects by Tharnish as a reason to not make a decision on this request. “This is the first time this has been presented to me. We are being forced to make decisions with big dollars,” but Mayor Don Wilson corrected him, saying this radium project money was approved in the budget. Tharnish argued, “So what you’re saying is we need to go out of compliance in order to motivate you to make a decision.”

Ultimately, the request failed.

Public comments

Resident Maggie Williamson told Tharnish he and his team are doing a fan-

tastic job but chided the board that its comments about radium are scaring the town residents. “You guys are pathetic,” she said and walked out.

Similarly, Monument Park Foreman James Schubauer said, “I just want to say, I appreciate all you guys’ service, making these big decisions. I live on this side, I drink this water, I know many people who asked me to come here tonight to represent them, I can’t help but feel we now have the opportunity to do something about the water and you guys dropped the ball.” He also walked out.

After both had left the room and during board comments, Bornstein

noted being on the board is a difficult volunteer position, saying, “The same residents come and throw rocks, but you don’t see those people volunteering.”

Kenneth Kimple discussed construction traffic through Promontory Pointe, noting there are nine bus stops on Gleneagle. Blind spots on the road’s curves should necessitate the creation of an emergency action plan that could include three-point roundabouts, lateral shifts, or chicanes (or horizontal deflection) to reduce speeding.

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 p.m. Allison Robenstein can be reached at allisonrobenstein@ocn.me.

Monument Board of Trustees Candidate Forum, March 10

Candidates discuss issues affecting Monument

By Allison Robenstein

Five candidates vying for three seats on the Monument Board of Trustees appeared at the Candidate Forum on March 10. They are Jim Romanello, Jamy Unruh, Ann Howe, Allison Thompson, and Mitch LaKind. The election will be held April 7 for the Town of Monument residents.

The Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce hosted the event, with KOAA News Broadcaster Andy Koen moderating.

Current Trustees Ron Stephens and Jeffrey Bornstein were in attendance, as was Mayor Don Wilson.

Questions were provided by Koen and the public, and included many issues affecting the town such as water, growth and development, and leadership.

It was noted during the meeting that all the candidates live on the east side of Monument and receive their water from either Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District or Triview Metropolitan District.

Water

Unruh said she attended the Monument Water Department’s drinking water workshop on Feb. 28 and indicated the most important project to her is reducing radium in the water from Well 9.

Howe suggested the Northern Monument Creek Interceptor will be the solution to the water problems.

Note: The Northern Monument Creek Interceptor is a potential regional wastewater pipeline that may allow northern entities, including Monument Water, to send wastewater flows to the J. D. Phillips Water Resource Recovery Facility run by Colorado Springs Utilities. Return flows of drinking water have been discussed, but plans for ei-

ther seem to be five years out at least.

Both Howe and Thompson said wells are not the best permanent water solution for providing drinking water. “What concerns me more is we need to invest in a reliable infrastructure with an emergency plan, because right now we don’t have one. So, if the water goes bad, it’s gone,” said Thompson.

LaKind said, “I am not an expert in water,” noting he began researching and talking with Public Works Director Tom Tharnish when he decided to run for the seat. We need to take the advice of the staff saying they have a plan for the water issues currently plaguing the town. He said one of the roles of being a trustee is to take the expert’s information and use that to make decisions not just with regard to water, but also to balance growth.

Growth and development

Romanello, a current trustee, said land use issues brought him to the board when he was the president of the Village Center Homeowners Association. He said because a previous board changed the zoning within the Village Center development without reviewing the service plan, they couldn’t even make a bond payment, pay for water, or receive snow removal services. Romanello said he would review development requests in a “right and smart and financially sound” manner.

Thompson said, “I would want to see growth here,” suggesting there is a way to balance growth while still maintaining the small-town feel. She has heard from others that Monument doesn’t have “a good place to grab a bite to eat,” when folks drive home from work for the day, and would like to help solve that problem.

Unruh said she is pro-growth with



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