

Roth, owner of the Boot Barn Hall and other venues, who is also the developer of the proposed Sunset Amphitheater. Their plan was still for a festival venue, but on a much larger scale than previously presented. They proposed a festival venue named “Palmer Lake Music Grounds” but said less than half of the festivals would be music related. They envisioned events that would be open during the day but shut down by 8 p.m. Details of their expanded proposal are here: <https://bit.ly/3QT7cMB>.

Roth said they would demolish the existing buildings, put the electrical service underground, and build a bandshell that would not block views and would send sound into the hills rather than toward residences. Bremer told the board they would build parking for festival attendees on the north side of town and shuttle attendees between the parking and the venue.

Bremer, Dunston, and Roth proposed that the town would retain ownership of the land but grant them a 99-year lease. They would pay a base rent and fees from ticket sales. They asked for no investment by the town and said they would handle all maintenance.

Their presentation said after 2025 the town would receive rent, ticket fees, sales tax, property tax and liquor tax. They estimated the town would receive \$310,000 annually from the venue.

**Willens detail spa concept**

Richard and Lindsay Willens proposed linking the trails on the Elephant Rock property together and renovating the existing pool into a spa. The spa would recycle its water and they would bring in mineral water from another spa in Manitou Springs. It would operate on a membership or reservation basis but would allow walk-ins as well.

The Willenses said they had several potential investors to cover the \$1.2 million need to build the spa. They also said they had spoken to Zearfoss and were considering partnering with his team.

**Mill levy override refined**

At an Aug. 15 special meeting, the board returned to its discussion of the ballot language for a mill levy override to appear on the November ballot along with an initiative authorizing the retail sale of adult-use cannabis. The board considered the details of the MLO from several perspectives, including:

- Likelihood of support by younger and older voters.
- How to mitigate the effect of an increase in mills on businesses.
- Whether the MLO initiative should be tied to the retail sale of cannabis initiative.
- How to give all voters an option to express their exact preference on both the mill increase and the retail sale of cannabis.
- How to make the ballot language as simple as possible.
- Whether to ask for a single mill increase adequate to meet the town’s needs or ask for a series of smaller increases.

Trustee Glant Havenar opened the discussion by telling the board that in her conversations with voters she saw that younger voters were more accepting of a mill increase but older voters were usually not in favor of an increase. She said she felt only one of the proposed initiatives would pass, and she recommended asking for one larger mill increase that was certain to meet the town’s needs.

Havenar also pointed out that an increase in mills would hit businesses harder than residents, since commercial properties are assessed at 29% and residential properties are assessed at 6.95%. She asked if it was possible to “de-Gallagherize” the town. Town Attorney Matthew Krob agreed to investigate ways to reduce the impact of an increase on commercial properties.

The board discussed methods to tie the mill increase and the retail sale of cannabis together. Krob told the board language along the lines of “if retail cannabis sales do not pass, shall mills be increased by a stated amount” would meet the legal requirements for a ballot initiative. He told the board that the two initiatives could be tied together and a mill increase could be proposed in a series of small steps or in one larger request. Krob also recommended, several times, that the ballot language be as simple as possible to avoid confusing voters.

The board did a quick straw poll on whether the mill increase question should be tied to the cannabis sales question. Trustee Nicole Currier said it would be confusing to tie them together and added that she could not accept a 35-mill increase.

Trustee Samantha Padgett and Mayor Bill Bass favored tying the questions. Trustee Jessica Farr thought they should not be tied. Havenar said tying the questions was confusing and made both unlikely to pass. Trustee Karen Stuth felt all the options discussed would confuse voters. Trustee Darin Dawson, who was traveling, exchanged texts with Bass, and he was receptive to tying the questions and would not support a mill increase larger than 20 mills.

All the trustees were against asking for a series of mill increases and favored a single request of voters.

Bass suggested the questions should be structured to propose that if retail cannabis sales passed, the mill increase should be up to but not exceeding 20 mills, and if retail sales failed then the mill increase should be 30 mills. Other trustees proposed other mill amounts for the two possibilities.

The board could not reach consensus on the question exactly how to tie the questions together and tabled that detail until the next regular board meeting.

Krob wrapped up the discussion by summarizing the requests trustees had made to staff as follows:

- Draft a simple initiative asking for a vote in favor or against retail sales of cannabis at only two stores in their present locations.
- A mill levy increase initiative that would specify a 15 mill increase if retail sales passed and a 30 mill in-

crease if retail sales did not pass.

- A second mill levy increase initiative for a 30 mill increase.
- The consensus of the board was that these choices would give voters a set of options allowing them to express their exact preferences.

The trustees voted on final versions of the retail sales ballot language and the mill increase language at their second regular meeting. See coverage on page 1.

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Workshops are scheduled on an as-needed basis. See the town’s website at [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://www.townofpalmerlake.com) to confirm times, dates, and locations of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 719-481-2953.

James Howald can be reached at [jameshowald@ocn.me](mailto:jameshowald@ocn.me). Jackie Burhans can be reached at [jackieburhans@ocn.me](mailto:jackieburhans@ocn.me).

# Fuel Church

**Location:** Meeting at Mountain Community Mennonite Church  
643 State Highway 105, Palmer Lake

**TIME:** Sunday Service in-person at 11:00am  
Live service streaming on [fuelchurch.org](http://fuelchurch.org) at 11:40am

Non-denominational Spirit-filled

Need prayer? email us at [info@fuel.org](mailto:info@fuel.org)

Sunday, September 11th @ 11:00am

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**PJ STEPHEN PAUL**  
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