



Above: The newly elected and continuing leadership of Palmer Lake posed together for a photograph. From left are Trustees Karen Stuth, Sam Padgett, Shana Ball, and Kevin Dreher, followed by Mayor Glant Havenar and Trustees Jessica Farr and Dennis Stern. Stuth, Padgett, and Farr are continuing their terms as trustees, while Ball, Dreher, and Stern were elected in the November election. Havenar, a former trustee, was elected mayor at the same time. *Photo by James Howald. Caption by Jackie Burhans.*

approved requests for changes to the premises of Alpine Essentials and Palmer Lake Wellness, the business owned by Dino Salvatore. Both businesses requested to add additional security cameras.

2023 budget and mill levy approved

At the Dec. 8 meeting, the newly seated board voted to approve Resolution 57-2022, which adopts the proposed budget and sets the town's mill levy.

The proposed 2023 budget increases wages and staffing at the departmental level in two phases: an increase in January and a possible second increase in July, if estimates of increased revenue are correct. The Water Fund is adjusted to balance the expenditure of American Recovery Plan Act funds in 2023, with those funds going to improve treatment facilities and the distribution system.

A mill levy of 21.238 mills was specified in the resolution, and the Town Administrator was authorized to communicate that to the El Paso Board of County Commissioners.

The resolution passed with Ball, Dreher, Havenar, Stuth, Havenar, and Stern voting in favor and Farr and Padgett voting against.

During public comments, resident Roger Mosely told the board his analysis of the budget led him to believe the Water Fund has been overspent for two years, and water rates will need to increase by \$30 per month.

The board also passed Resolution 58-2022, which confirms Green & Associates LLC as the town's auditor. Ball, Dreher, Farr, Havenar, Stern and Stuth voted in favor; Padgett voted no.

Tri-Lakes Cares presentation

Haley Chapin, executive director of Tri-Lakes Cares (TLC), and Stephanie Force, director of development at TLC, gave the board an overview of the organization's strategy and services. Chapin explained that TLC is primarily known as a food pantry but also provides emergency relief and self-sufficiency services. A family of four with an income of \$68,500 would be eligible for services from TLC, she said. Chapin said TLC case managers were trained to address issues resulting from generational and situational poverty.

Chapin said TLC provides limited medical assistance to those without insurance or with insurance that is too expensive to use for less than catastrophic illnesses.

Chapin explained that TLC has many more volunteers than staff and asked anyone interesting in donating time to contact the organization.

Chapin ended with some statistics specific to Palmer Lake. She said

that in 2022, TLC had aided 191 residents of Palmer Lake, and had provided \$45,000 in housing funding to residents and medical assistance to 145 residents.

Details about TLC's services and volunteer opportunities can be found on its website: <https://tri-lakescares.org/>. Its office is at 235 N. Jefferson St. in Monument.

Featured artist banner program

Gina Brenneman and Amy Hutson, speaking on behalf of the Palmer Lake

Arts Council (PLAC), asked the board to consider supporting the placement of banners that would highlight Palmer Lake's resident artists. A local artist would be highlighted for six months on banners that would include a sample of their work. The program would include a pop-up location to display the artist's work. The banners would be mounted on light posts, Brenneman and Hutson said.

Brenneman said Stuth asked the PLAC to put together a plan in con-

cert with the Palmer Lake Economic Development Group.

The board voted unanimously to approve a permit to allow the banners.

Executive session

The Dec. 15 meeting ended in an executive session to consider negotiating positions concerning a Fire Department Intergovernmental Agreement, the lease on the Elephant Rock property, a property offer, a possible annexation, and a water service request.

No action was taken following the executive session.

The next board meetings are scheduled for Jan. 12 and 26. See the town's website at www.townofpalmerlake.com to confirm times and dates of board meetings and workshops. Meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at the Town Hall. Information: 719-481-2953.

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