

to do dryland training and practice shooting pucks using lanes that would return the pucks to the shooter, measure the speed of the shots and include special effects.

There were no comments from the public. Krob said Tahmindjis had met all requirements for the permit and the board voted unanimously to approve it.

**Board and commission appointments**

The board approved a set of resolutions at the Jan. 11 meeting that re-appointed volunteers to board and commissions:

- Resolution 3-2024, which re-appoints Susan Miner, Lindsey Zapalac, and Tim Caves to the Planning Commission.
- Resolution 4-2024, which re-appoints Reid Wiecks, Cindy Powell, Kevin Magner, and Garcia Woods to the Parks and Trails Commission.
- Resolution 5-2024, which re-appoints Havenar to represent the town on the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments.
- Resolution 6-2024, which re-appoints Bob Miner, Eddie Kinney, and Kevin Dreher to the Board of Adjustments.

The board also voted in favor of resolutions to retain Green & Associates as the town’s auditor and to authorize the Parks and Trails Commission to continue its work on the Elephant Rock trail.

**Executive sessions**

The Jan. 11 meeting ended with an executive session for the board to receive legal advice concerning public comments and hate speech.

The Jan. 25 meeting ended with an executive ses-



**Above:** At its Jan. 25 meeting, the Palmer Lake Board of Trustees closed the Tri-Lakes Center for the Arts (TLCA) to the public due to fire safety concerns. In December, the board granted a conditional use permit to TLCA to allow the newly formed Movement Church to use the building for periodic church services. The conditions imposed by the Palmer Lake Planning Commission at its November meeting were that TLCA must complete inspections by the Palmer Lake Fire Department (PLFD) and by the Pikes Peak Regional Department (PPRBD) and address any issues that came up during those inspections. Palmer Lake Fire Chief John Vincent said that he had done a partial inspection and had some fire safety concerns but that he had been denied access to a portion of the building. He also said the PPRBD was unable to complete an inspection because it did not have current plans for the building, which had been substantially changed since it last had a certificate of occupancy in 1999. The board voted 3-2 to close TLCA until the issues were resolved. *Photo by Jackie Burhans.*

sion to determine negotiation strategies for the sale of town property and to receive legal advice concerning a Police Department complaint.

No actions were taken following either executive session.

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The next regular board meetings are scheduled for Feb. 8 and 22. See the town’s website at [www.townofpalmerlake.com](http://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.

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).

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**MONUMENT (Cont. from 1)**

**Ordinance approval and Council District Advisory Commission**

The council discussed and approved two ordinances during the meeting. Ordinance No. 25-2023 established the Council District Advisory Commission, while Ordinance No. 01-2024 adopted Chapter 2.60 of the Monument Municipal Code regarding standards of conduct. Mayor Pro Tem Steve King commended the level of detail in the latter ordinance, emphasizing its importance. Mayor Mitch LaKind thanked Councilmember Laura Kronick for spearheading the project. The ordinances passed unanimously, with LaKind expressing relief at fulfilling requirements from the Home Rule Charter.

**Willow Springs Ranch PUD Amendment**

A significant portion of the Jan. 2 meeting was dedicated to discussing Ordinance No. 03-2024, which approved a major PUD amendment for the Willow Springs Ranch Preliminary/Final PUD Site Plan. Blane Perkins, representing the applicant, explained that adjustments were made to eight lots to accommodate a Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) easement. This led to a reduction in lot sizes below the R4 minimum of 5,000 square feet.

Councilmembers raised questions about the process, the nature of the error, and the potential for alternative solutions. During the discussion, Councilmember Jim Romanello characterized the issue as a simple mistake, while LaKind likened it to house-keeping. Councilmember Kenneth Kimple, however, inquired if there had been any consideration given to removing the houses in question. Despite the various considerations, the ordinance ultimately passed unanimously, with a consensus that the adjustment was deemed necessary for utilities and access easements.

**Property tax mill levy resolution**

Director of Finance Mona Hirjoi presented Resolution No. 75-2023, seeking authorization for the certification of the property tax mill levy to the El Paso County Assessor for the 2024 budget year. The council discussed various scenarios for the mill levy, with LaKind expressing a desire to lower it. Legal counsel cautioned against decreasing it too much, as subsequent increases might require voter approval. The council settled on a reduction to 5.0, with Romanello preferring 5.0 and Kimple suggesting 5.25. The resolution passed unanimously.

**Zeal at Jackson Creek**

**Final Plat discussion**

The meeting concluded with a discussion of Resolu-

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TRI-LAKES

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tion No. 04-2024, approving the final plat for Zeal at Jackson Creek. Concerns were raised about rights of way and setbacks, prompting a motion by Romanello to continue the discussion to February. Councilmembers emphasized the need to ensure proper road classification for Higby and maintain control over town-owned land.

LaKind urged thorough consideration of the road’s design, with Councilmember Steve King emphasizing compliance with town code. The resolution was tabled until February, with a unanimous vote to continue the discussion.

**Moratorium divides Monument Town Council and developers**

In a highly charged meeting on Dec. 16, 2023, tensions flared between the MTC and developers as they clashed over Ordinance No. 04-2024, proposing a temporary suspension of new applications under the Town of Monument Land Development Code. The ordinance, presented by MTC lawyer Bob Cole, sought a moratorium lasting until the July 15 meeting to allow the staff to restructure and hire a new planning director.

Town Manager Mike Foreman, advocating for the moratorium, underscored the increasing number of errors made in handling development cases. He emphasized the urgency of hiring a consultant to review and adjust procedures, hire a new director, and tackle the backlog of 25-30 cases that required immediate attention. LaKind expressed concern over the frequent turnover of planning directors and proposed an independent investigation to uncover the root causes.

The development community, particularly Classic Homes, expressed frustration over the moratorium. One representative criticized the town, stating, “You guys are rough on [developers].” The sentiment was that the town officials, acting as judge and jury, were playing politics and had personal agendas, making the process challenging. In response to LaKind’s suggestion that developers should not expect the town to come in blind, Classic Homes argued that written statements of opinion should not be formed before all the facts are presented.

The planning director for a Home Builders Association expressed concern over the negative message conveyed by imposing a moratorium on new developments, stating, “It’s hard to do business here.” This sentiment reflected a broader sentiment among developers who found the current environment in Monument less favorable for conducting business compared to other locations along the Front Range.

A notable exchange occurred between Foreman and Classic Homes CEO Doug Stimple. Stimple voiced strong concerns, arguing that the moratorium would jeopardize ongoing projects and lead to substantial financial losses. Foreman, in response, clarified the need for a strategic pause to rectify past mistakes and improve the town’s development processes. “I got jumped on,” Foreman claimed. Stimple responded, “If you had \$20 million invested in the project, you’d like clarification, too.”

Despite attempts to address developers’ concerns, the council voted 7-0 in favor of the moratorium.

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The Monument Council usually meets at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month at Monument Town Hall, 645 Beacon Lite Road. The next meetings are scheduled for Monday, Feb. 5 and 19. Call 719-884-8014 or see [www.townofmonument.org](http://www.townofmonument.org) for information. To see upcoming agendas and complete board packets or to download audio recordings of past meetings, see <http://monumenttownco.minutesondemand.com> and click on Town Council.

Chris Jeub can be reached at [chrisjeub@ocn.me](mailto:chrisjeub@ocn.me).

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