

for the mill levy ballot measure they intend to place on the November ballot. Burns said a steering committee would start in January. The committee would also help determine the proposed mill levy increase that would have the most chance of success with voters.

The November 2017 ballot measure will ask district property owners to approve a mill levy increase to help pay for budget shortfalls due to the annexation of over half the remaining district by Colorado Springs. By 2019, Wescott will be operating on 33 percent of its current revenue, and it will be up to voters to say what level of service they want from DWFPD and are willing to pay for.

Burns said the steering committee meetings will be advertised well in advance to allow any or all board members to attend at the same time without concerns about violating the Sunshine Law if three or more directors (a board meeting quorum) happen to attend.

**Long-term viability discussed**

Feltz asked about the long-term viability of the district. Director Harland Baker said the district could last three to four years using the same operating budget as it has for 2017 and spending down its reserves. After that, "we would have to reduce staff." But he was optimistic that the mill levy might be changed from 7 to 9 or 10, that property values would also go up, and these increases would change the equation. The steering committee will look at those numbers in detail, he said.

Feltz asked if the board was exploring any other opportunities. "Like merging?" Baker said. "I think there are options available, but it takes two to tango. We could say 'yes we want to merge,' but someone else has to say they want to merge too to make it work."

**Station 3 sale delayed**

Burns first asked the question about what to do with Station 3 at 15000 Sun Hills Drive back in 2013 when construction of the new Shamrock Station 2 was completed.

Selling Station 3 has been discussed on and off several times since then, finally culminating in last month's decision by the board to hire a realtor and list the property for \$195,000. See [www.ocn.me/v13n5.htm#dwfpd](http://www.ocn.me/v13n5.htm#dwfpd) and [www.ocn.me/v16n12.htm#dwfpd1115](http://www.ocn.me/v16n12.htm#dwfpd1115).

However, on Dec. 6, the neighbors immediately adjacent to the property asked the board to delay putting the property on the market, because they had just become aware of the fact it might be sold. They said they knew of two people who said a 1984 warranty deed document stipulated that if the building ceased to be used as a fire station, it would revert the property back to the grantor, which was their property.

"We need a chance to do our due diligence," George German said. He and his wife Ruth were also concerned that if the existing building were converted to a home, it would violate covenants that exist in that neighborhood, and they were disappointed not to have been notified that the property was going to be put on the market.

President Greg Gent and Burns both explained the legal searches they had already done, and that this warranty deed had not turned up then. Also, Burns said it was not mentioned on the original copy of the deed. However, the consensus of the board was to delay putting the property on the market until these neighbors' questions could be resolved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.  
\*\*\*\*\*

The next Donald Wescott Fire Protection District Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Jan. 17 at Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Meeting are usually on the third Tuesday of each month. For information, call Executive Administrator Stacey Popovich at 488-8680 or see [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org). The district is also on Facebook.

*If you would like to help OCN report on the Donald*

**Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District, Dec. 7**

**2017 budget, wage increase approved**

*By Lisa Hatfield*

At the Dec. 7 meeting of the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District (TLMFPD), the directors approved a 2017 budget that includes a 6 percent wage increase and discussed the current hiring process and a proposed intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD).

**2017 budget approved**

The directors unanimously approved a resolution finalizing the 2017 budget:

- Total revenue – \$6.1 million
- Total expenditures – \$6.0 million

They also approved a resolution appropriating funds for that budget and a resolution formally setting the mill levy at 11.5 mills.

Then they unanimously approved a 2017 wage scale that reflects a 6 percent increase in base wages for all personnel with the exception of the chief and deputy chief, whose salaries will remain the same as 2016. Fire Chief Chris Truty said this increase puts wages 8 to 10 percent below comparable district's average wages, but this was better than the 20 percent below average it was a few years ago. See [www.ocn.me/v15n9.htm#tlmfpd0826](http://www.ocn.me/v15n9.htm#tlmfpd0826).

The plan is to increase wages again next year to bring them closer to the average of those in comparable districts. Truty said he thought the current mill levy could handle that.

However, Truty said that the 2017 budget is the second in a row that sets aside less than \$100,000 for future capital expenditures such as vehicle purchases or station improvements.

**Hiring process under way**

Deputy Chief Randy Trost said that of 87 applicants in the recent hiring process, 47 had correctly completed the application, making them eligible to take the written exam, and 34 of those people passed that exam. The staff has decided to conduct oral boards with those 34 and continue with psychological exams, physicals, etc. as they work to fill the four open positions and line up other qualified candidates for future hiring. Trost said the goal was to send new hires to the West Metro Denver Fire Academy at the end of January.

**Wescott FPD requests IGA**

Truty told the directors that on Dec. 6, the district received a letter from DWFPD advising TLMFPD that an IGA would be needed between the two fire protection districts by the end of January regarding fees TLMFPD would pay DWFPD for the disproportionate amount of

aid DWFPD is providing. Mutual aid for fire calls would remain intact, but automatic aid is different and looking for clarification, Truty said. Note: This topic was not discussed in the public session of any recent DWFPD meeting.

Truty said that in the Jackson Creek and Fox Run areas of TLMFPD, it is DWFPD that answers a majority of the calls. "They are providing a level of service to us that we do not do on our own," Truty said. Wescott's Station 1 on Gleneagle Drive is minutes closer in response time to the southern portion of TLMFPD's service area.

The directors and Truty discussed many other details of these negotiations during the public session of the meeting. Vice President Roger Lance said he had heard from a Wescott board member that DWFPD's Shamrock Station 2 would be closing and therefore sending all those staff members to Station 1 on Gleneagle Drive starting Jan. 1. **Note:** This information contradicts what was said at the Dec. 6 DWFPD board meeting.

President Jake Shirk said he had already talked with one of the DWFPD board members to request an informal relationship-building meeting between the two districts. **Note:** This information is inconsistent with what was said at the Dec. 6 DWFPD meeting.

See related Dec. 6 DWFPD meeting on page 18.

Truty said DWFPD's Chief Vinny Burns requested an answer by Jan. 31, but the consensus of the TLMFPD board was that they had a lot of questions and clarifications to answer before they could come up with an agreement, and the next TLMFPD board meeting is not scheduled until Jan. 25.

The meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.  
\*\*\*\*\*

On Dec. 16, Fire Chief Chris Truty notified OCN that Fire Marshal John Vincent was no longer with TLMFPD. The interim fire marshal will be Battalion Chief Jamey Bumgarner, who can be reached at [jbumgarner@tlmfire.org](mailto:jbumgarner@tlmfire.org) or 719-484-0911.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meetings are usually held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 25 at TLMFPD Station 1, 18650 Highway 105. For information, contact Jennifer Martin at 719-484-0911 or see [www.tlmfire.org](http://www.tlmfire.org).

*If you would like to help OCN report on the Tri-Lakes Monument Fire Protection District by recording meetings or writing articles, contact Lisa Hatfield at [lisahatfield@ocn.me](mailto:lisahatfield@ocn.me).*

*Wescott Fire Protection District by recording meetings or writing articles, contact Lisa Hatfield at [lisahatfield@ocn.me](mailto:lisahatfield@ocn.me).*

**Specializing in Residential Cleaning** *A Gift of Time*  
Overwhelmed?  
Want your home spic and span?  
**Call Stacy today!**  
**(719) 930-2178**  
[www.agiftoftime.us](http://www.agiftoftime.us)  
Weekly • Bi-weekly • Monthly • Move-outs • Move-ins.



**Adult/Senior Day Service**  
Caregivers: Please come to our Open House Friday, January 13, 11:00 am-4:00pm.  
• Enjoy some Appetizers and Refreshments  
• Find out how to make your life easier  
• Let us assist in the care of your loved ones  
**Come Spend a Safe and Fun Day With Us!**  
755 Highway 105  
**(719) 488-1415**  
[liftingspirits@qwestoffice.net](mailto:liftingspirits@qwestoffice.net)  
[www.LiftingSpiritsCare.net](http://www.LiftingSpiritsCare.net)  
Sonja Search, CNA



**World-Class Truck, UTV & ATV Plows**  
**Sales, Installs & Repairs**  
**Sharpest Cut**  
**719-491-4811**




**Restorative Therapies**  
**MARA GULLER, LMT, CLT, INHC**  
*Licensed Massage Therapist  
Certified Lymphedema Therapist  
Certified Integrative Nutrition Health Coach*  
Neuromuscular Trigger Point, Deep Tissue, MLD/CDT for Lymphedema, Therapeutic Hot Stone for Relaxation and Pain Relief.  
*Decreasing back, neck, and shoulder pain for over 24 years!*  
**\$20 OFF your first massage or health coaching session!** New clients only.  
**(719) 290-5534** [www.maragullerlmt.fullslate.com](http://www.maragullerlmt.fullslate.com)



**Wondering what to give that special person in your life?**  
Give a gift that keeps on giving.  
Give the gift of success.  
**Give a gift certificate for OCN advertising!**  
You can have the gift certificate automatically emailed to your special person or you can print it and mail it or present it in person. To purchase your gift certificate, go to [www.ocn.me/advertise.htm#buynow](http://www.ocn.me/advertise.htm#buynow) and click **Buy Gift Certificate**  
Questions? Call John Heiser at 488-3455.


