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The next Monument Planning Commission meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on

Wednesday, Jan. 11 at 645 Beacon Lite Rd. Meetings are normally held on the second Wednesday of the month. Infor-

mation: 884-8017 or <http://www.townof-monument.org/meetings/>

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

Palmer Lake Town Council, Dec. 8

# Impact of new marijuana taxes debated

By James Howald

In December, the Palmer Lake Town Council met only once, on Dec. 8. The meeting included a session of the Palmer Lake Liquor and Marijuana Licensing Authority as well as a Town Council meeting.

Once again, the council wrestled with the question of how to properly tax marijuana businesses, this time in light of the new license fees approved by the council earlier in the year. The council also passed ordinances to adopt a previously approved budget for fiscal year 2017 and to extend the town's sales tax, and granted a new liquor license.

## New fee on marijuana licenses

## has unexpected impacts on local business

In 2016, Palmer Lake passed an ordinance that raised the licensing fees paid by marijuana-related businesses to \$5,000 per license. At the Dec. 8 Town Council meeting, Dino Salvatori addressed the council and described to them the problems the fee increase posed to his business, Palmer Lake Wellness.

In his remarks to the council, Salvatori pointed out the benefits provided to the town by his marijuana cultivation and medical dispensary business: He spent \$1 million renovating an empty building that was an eyesore, he has contributed \$5,000 to the Palmer Lake Fire Department, he

has created 16 jobs in the community, and his business reduced illegal drug sales in the town. Over the five years he has been in business, he has paid the town \$60,000 in taxes, he said.

Salvatori went on to point out to the council that his business holds not one but four different licenses, so the new fees will add up to \$20,000 per year. His medical licenses limit the number of plants that he can grow based on the number of patients that have designated him as their caregiver, Salvatori said, and that means he can't simply grow more plants to help offset the new licensing fees without also increasing the number of patients he supports. He would have to add an additional 270 patients to cover the fee increase, he said.

Salvatori asked that the licensing fees be reduced, and said if they remained at their current amount he would close his business.

Town Attorney Jill Hassman said that if the council wanted to change the fee, they would have to pass a new resolution to do so, and that could not be done at the December meeting.

Mayor John Cressman asked that the issue be tabled until January, adding that the intent of the council in setting the fee was not to be punitive. Trustee Rich Kuehster said that when the council considered raising the fee in June, he did not understand the number of licenses held by Salvatori's business. Trustee Mark Schuler and Town Manager Cathy Green-Sinnard agreed that they had not understood the multiple license issue either. There was a consensus among the trustees that some time was needed to review the fees charged in other communities. Trustee Paul Banta added "Everyone here

wants to get the fees down for you; you have a sympathetic board; we are going to do what we can." Finally, Cressman stated that Salvatori would need to pay \$10,000 for two of his licenses by Dec. 27 to remain in business but could put the fees for the other two licenses on hold for up to one year, according to state law.

## 2017 budget approved; sales tax extended

The council also passed ordinances to adopt a budget for fiscal year 2017 that had been discussed in previous Town Council meetings and work sessions, and to place funds in the accounts specified in the budget.

Another ordinance was passed to extend an existing sales tax in perpetuity. The tax was approved by voters in November, but this ordinance was required to prevent a one-month gap in the collection of the tax.

## New liquor license granted to Arlene's Beans

The council voted unanimously to approve a liquor license for Arlene's Beans, a Mexican restaurant and convenience store at 56 Highway 105. The convenience store portion of the business will sell beer, wine and spirits, but the alcohol may not be consumed on the premises, according to the license granted.

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The two meetings for January will be at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 12 and 26 at Town Hall, 42 Valley Crescent. Meetings are normally held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Information: 481-2953.

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

## Forest Lakes Metropolitan District and Pinon Pines Metro Districts 1, 2, and 3, Dec. 5

# 2016 budgets amended; 2017 budgets approved, mill levies certified

By Lisa Hatfield

At the Dec. 5 meeting, the joint boards and simultaneous meetings of the Forest Lakes Metropolitan District (FLMD) and Pinon Pines Metropolitan District 1 (PPMD 1), Pinon Pines Metro District 2 (PPMD 2), and Pinon Pines Metro District 3 (PPMD 3) approved amendments to the 2016 budgets, approved the 2017 budgets, and certified mill levies now totaling 50 mills for all three Pinon districts. See the map on page 10.

**Note:** Forest Lakes Metropolitan District has no relationship with the separate Forest View Acres Water District in the foothills to the north.

Secretary James Bolton was excused.

## Background on Forest Lakes Metro District and taxing districts PPMD 1, 2, and 3

FLMD, west of I-25 at the end of West Baptist Road, is a service district in El Paso County established in 1985; the residential portions are not part of the town of Monument, but the commercial section PPMD 3 is within the town limits. FLMD holds joint board meetings with PPMD 1, 2 and 3, which were established in 2004

when FLMD was reorganized into its current half-acre size.

Board members for all four boards are President George Lenz, executive vice president of finance, Classic Homes; Secretary James Bolton, vice president/project manager, Classic Homes; Assistant Secretary and Treasurer Doug Stimple, CEO of Classic Homes; and Assistant Secretary Joe Loidolt, president of Classic Homes. One board member vacancy exists now. Ann Nichols is the district manager for all four districts. District Counsel Russell Dykstra and Tom Blunk of CP Real Estate Capital, representing Forest Lakes LLC and Forest Lakes Residential Development, also attended the Dec. 5 meeting.

FLMD and the three Pinons plan to eventually include 467 residential lots in PPMD 1 and 2 and 215 acres of commercial development in PPMD 3. FLMD is the operating district responsible for water and wastewater services, drainage and stormwater discharge, roads, parks and trails, and landscaping and street lights for the three Pinons. The residents of Forest Lakes will reside in three taxing districts, PPMD 1, 2, or 3, and all of

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Monday Evenings from  
February 6 through March 6  
5:30 pm - 9:15 pm  
Light Snacks provided

Classes located at:  
Palmer Ridge High School  
Sunset Room  
19255 Monument Hill Rd.  
Monument, CO 80132

Class modules will Include:

- Personal and Family Emergency Preparedness
- Disaster Medical Operations
- Deep Wound First Aid
- Live Hands-on Fire Extinguisher Practice
- Terrorism Awareness
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