

Donald Wescott Fire Protection District, Nov. 21

## After mill levy win, district looks to finalize budget

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Donald Wescott Fire Protection District (DWFPD) Board of Directors met on Nov. 21 as it awaited final revenue numbers from the El Paso County Assessor's Office to finalize the budget. All board members were present except Harland Baker, who was excused.

Chief Vinny Burns thanked the community in supporting the overwhelming victory in raising the levy from 7 to 21.9 mills in the Nov. 7 election (see election results on page 20). He expressed special thanks to those who worked on committees and pitched in to get the levy passed. Capt. Sean Pearson echoed Burns' gratitude on behalf of the firefighters.

### 2018 budget approval briefly postponed

Burns stated that not much had changed regarding the 2018 budget since the board's October meeting. He explained that he was waiting for final numbers from the Assessor's Office, which should come in seven to 10 days. Burns noted that revenue was estimated at \$2.297 million. Because of the district's reduced size, Burns stated that the Special Ownership Tax revenue was conservatively cut from \$250,000

to \$75,000. He estimated \$1.5 million would be placed in reserves to prepare for capital improvement projects.

Administrative Assistant Stacey Popovich explained Resolution 2017-005 that, if approved by the board, would change the district's current accident and sickness policy and coverage through the Heart, Circulatory and Cancer Trust that is part of the Special District Association of Colorado pool. The change would create a \$6,000 savings for the district and would bring it into compliance with legislative changes. The board unanimously approved the resolution.

Resident Dennis Feltz asked if the insurance change benefitted volunteers retroactively. Popovich replied that the insurance changes, effective Jan. 1, 2018, would only apply to active volunteers who have served for a certain period of time and career firefighters. Burns and Ridings confirmed that the parameters were established by the state of Colorado.

### Special awards given

Burns presented certificates of commendation to Pearson and Assistant Chief Scott Ridings for their hard work in coordinating and developing the



**Above:** Assistant Chief Scott Ridings, left, and Capt. Sean Pearson received honors for their exceptional work in training local fire districts. *Photo by Jennifer Kaylor.*

highly successful North Group live fire training at the clubhouse of the former Gleneagle Golf Course.

### Bank balances increase

Popovich reported on the district's October bank balances, which increased by \$5,245 overall. Director Joyce Hartung requested an amendment to the October minutes to reflect that Burns responded to resident Gary Rusnak's question about the Station 2 easement.

### Chiefs' reports

Ridings reported that Wescott responded to 27 EMS calls and 30 fire calls for a total of 57 responses in October. Average response times were 5:41 for EMS and 5:20 for fire, and an average 5:35 per call. Mutual Aid was given on 14 calls and received on four calls. None of the calls resulted in fire loss. Popovich notes delay in notices

Feltz, the only resident in attendance, stated that he had requested but not received notices of board meetings and meeting minutes. Feltz also requested a copy of the budget. Popovich apologized for the delay in meeting notices and minutes. Board President Greg Gent indicated that

a budget would be made available. Burns' review of the budget clarified that a budget would not be ready until December.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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### Santa Patrol set for Dec. 16

After the meeting, the district reported that Wescott's annual Santa Patrol, where Santa rides a fire truck through the district's neighborhoods and hands out candy to kids, is scheduled for 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 16. Santa's route will be posted on the website, listed below.

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The next DWFPD board of directors meeting will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. Note that this meeting is being held two weeks in advance of its normal schedule. The meeting location is Station 1, 15415 Gleneagle Drive. Please call (719) 488-8680, a non-emergency number, for more information, or visit [www.wescottfire.org](http://www.wescottfire.org). The district is also on Facebook and Twitter.

Jennifer Kaylor can be reached at [jenniferkaylor@ocn.me](mailto:jenniferkaylor@ocn.me).



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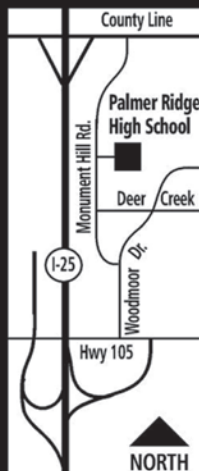
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